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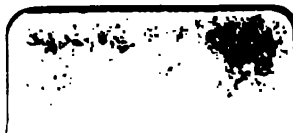
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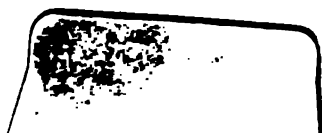


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KINGS AND QUEENS OF AN HOUR.

KINGS AND QUEENS OF AN HOUR:

*RECORDS OF LOVE, ROMANCE, ODDITY,
AND ADVENTURE.*

By PERCY FITZGERALD, M.A., F.S.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF GEORGE THE FOURTH," "THE LIFE OF GARRICK,"
"A NEW HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE," ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

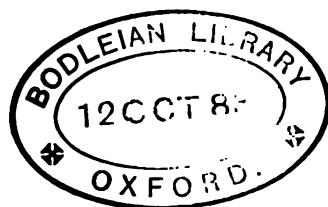
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CONTENTS.

THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON	PAGE 1
THE BISHOP OF DERRY	45
THE STORY OF PEG WOFFINGTON	55
GEORGE BRUMMEL	87
PAUL JONES	125
BECKFORD AND FONTHILL ABBEY	191
IRELAND AND THE SHAKESPEARE FORGERIES	221
THE STORY OF MRS. FITZHERBERT	257

	PAGE
AN OLD LADY'S LOVE—THE STORY OF CON- WAY THE ACTOR	299
THE STORY OF HUGH ELLIOT	333
THE STORY OF "MIE-MIE"	355
THE BEAUTIFUL DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE .	371

THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON.

KINGS AND QUEENS OF AN HOUR:

RECORDS OF LOVE AND ADVENTURE.

THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON.

It is curious to find that two families, united by marriage, should have furnished, on both sides, such a number of remarkable personages whose career has been marked by conspicuous, if not clever, eccentricity. The Herveys and the Kingstons and their connections furnish a strong contingent to the strange band of English oddities. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu—herself a daughter of the Kingston House—has wittily declared, according to their scheme of creation, that “*God made men, women, and Herveys.*” Of the band of Herveys and their connections we have :

Lord Hervey (of the “Memoirs,” and Pope’s lines); “Tom” Hervey (Johnson’s); the beautiful Molly Lepel, who became Lady Hervey; the Earl

of Bristol, Bishop of Derry; the Duchess of Kingston (Countess of Hervey); Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and the singular Edward Montagu, her son; this band of remarkable persons out of two families is very singular; the more so, as there was a special *flavour*, if it might be so styled, about their oddities and general behaviour.

It is difficult not to be interested in Lord Hervey, the elegant, cultivated, and witty chamberlain. His "Memoirs" are extraordinary for their vivacity, touchings of character, and general entertainment. For instance, in his sketch of the marriage of the Princess Royal with the Prince, how lively and amusing is his description!

This courtier was an elegant scholar, a man of observation and sagacity, the accepted favourite of one of the princesses, and finally, the antagonist of Pope, who has gibbeted him as "Lord Fanny" and Sporus, in well-known lines:

P. Let Sporus tremble——

A. What? that thing of silk,
Sporus! that mere white curd of asses' milk?
Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?
Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?

P. Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
This painted child of dirt, that stinks and stings;
Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,
Yet wit ne'er tastes and beauty ne'er enjoys:
So well-bred spaniels civilly delight
In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.

Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,
 As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.
 Whether in florid impotence he speaks,
 And as the prompter breathes the puppet squeaks ;
 Or at the ear of *Eve*, familiar toad !
 Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,
 In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,
 Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies ;
 His wit all see-saw between *that* and *this*,
 Now high, now low, now *master* up, now *miss*,
 And he himself one vile antithesis.
 Amphibious thing ! that, acting either part,
 The trifling head or the corrupted heart ;
 Fop at the toilet, flatt'rer at the board,
 Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord !
 Eve's tempter thus, the Rabbins have exprest,
 A cherub's face—a reptile all the rest ;
 Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust,
 Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust.

Mr. Croker says, justly, that “though the substance and many of the sharpest points of the bitter invective as well as of the prose ‘Letter’ were originally taken from Pulteney’s libel, the brilliancy is all the poet’s own ; and it is impossible not to admire, however we may condemn, the art by which *acknowledged* wit, beauty, and gentle manners—the Queen’s favour—and even a valetudinary diet, are travestied into the most odious defects and offences.

The lines on Molly Lepel are also well known :

Bright Venus yet never saw bedded
 So perfect a beau and a belle,
 As when Hervey the handsome was wedded
 To the beautiful Molly Lepel !

If to the seraglio you brought her,
Where for slaves their maidens they sell,
I'm sure, though the Grand-Seignior bought her,
He'd soon turn a slave to Lepel !

Had I Hanover, Bremen, and Verden,
And likewise the Duchy of Zell,
I'd part with them all for a farthing,
To have my dear Molly Lepel !

Or, were I the King of Great Britain,
To choose a minister well,
And support the throne that I sit on,
I'd have under me Molly Lepel !

Of all the bright beauties so killing,
In London's fair city that dwell,
None can give me such joy, were she willing,
As the beautiful Molly Lepel !

Readers of Boswell's "Johnson" will recall the sage's strange fancy for the Herveys. "If you call a dog Hervey," he said, "I shall love him." The "mad Tom Hervey," whom he knew, had a quarrel about his wife with a certain Sir J. Hanmer, and his letters on the subject are of the most singular kind. He is principally recollected for issuing public notices about his wife, generally to this effect : "That whereas she had often left her home last year, and at least as often the year before, without either my leave or privity ; and likewise encouraged her son to persist in the same rebellious practices ; I hereby declare that I neither am nor will be accountable for any future debts of her whatever ; she is now keeping forcible

possession of my house, to which I never did invite or ever thought of inviting her in all my life.—
THOMAS HERVEY."

Of the strange and brilliant Lady Mary nothing need be said here, as her story is a familiar figure to all. Lord Bristol, the eccentric Bishop of Derry, we shall turn to after disposing of the duchess.

The chief incident in the story of the Duchess of Kingston, and what is most familiar, is her bigamous marriage and solemn trial by the peers. But, apart from this historic scene, the Duchess, or rather the Countess of Bristol, was a singular character, and one of mark, and her life offered strange adventures. There have been many women of this type who have escaped notoriety perhaps because they were possessed of small means; but a lady of eccentric disposition, self-willed, and possessed of a large fortune which she could spend as she pleased, was certain to give way to her caprices and humours. Her wishes and actions are supported by the best of all arguments, and plenty are found to help and forward such fancies when money is forthcoming.

Sometimes this lady reminds us of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu herself, sometimes of the Duchess of Gordon. To have been the friend of Catherine of Russia, and of many foreigners of mark, shows that she must have had gifts of a certain force and influence. In many points she recalls the late Duke

of Brunswick. In her prodigality associated with stinginess and recklessness of behaviour, an assumption that she was above or beyond the law, in love of jewels, love of foreigners and of foreign countries, there is a curious suggestion of similarity. This may, however, be one of the operating curses of wealth, and which works in the same way and with the same results on characters of a particular order.

Miss Chudleigh was well connected, being niece to Sir J. Chudleigh, of Ashton, in Devonshire. In 1743 she became maid of honour, and during this and subsequent years her singular escapades were the talk of the court, notably her appearance in extraordinary costume at a court ball, but which, however, seems to have been tolerated, all the same, quite as much as that of a well-known German princess in the days of the Second Empire. Her sayings were quoted, and much amusement was caused by her mysterious conduct.

Miss Chudleigh figures conspicuously in the pictures of court-life drawn by Walpole and others; and many stories were current of her behaviour at court and elsewhere. She came of a good family in Devonshire. She was born, it was said, in 1720. Her father was a colonel in the army, and on his death she was left nearly penniless with a widowed mother." Thus narrowed in fortune, Mrs. Chudleigh availed herself of the best substitute for money—

good connections. These the rank, situation, and habits of her husband had placed within her power. She hired a house fit, at that less refined period of time, for a fashionable town residence; and she accommodated an inmate, for the purpose of adding to the scantiness of her income. Her daughter Elizabeth was soon distinguished for a brilliancy of repartee, and for other qualities highly recommendatory, because extremely pleasing. An opportunity for the display of them to every advantage the possessor could reasonably desire, offered at a moment when fortune was benignantly disposed. The father of our present sovereign had his court at Leicester House. Mr. Pulteney, who then blazed as a meteor in the hemisphere of opposition, was honoured with the particular regard of the Prince of Wales. Miss Chudleigh was introduced to Mr. Pulteney, and he obtained her, at the age of about eighteen, the appointment of a maid of honour to the Princess of Wales. Mr. Pulteney did more than thus place her in an elevated station; he endeavoured to cultivate her understanding. To him Miss Chudleigh read; and with him, when separated by distance, she corresponded. Her maxim on every subject was, according to her own expression, to be "short, clear, and surprising." A voluminous author was, consequently, her aversion; and a prolix story, however interesting, disgusted her, merely from the circumstance of pro-

lixity. The value of a penny he had studied to a nicety ; one of his practical theorems was, that a man with the price of a pot of porter in his pocket, should purchase only a pint, however extreme his thirst. But it was not until the year 1743 that her regular adventures were to commence. Among her most ardent admirers, it was said, was the Duke of Hamilton, who, later, as we have seen, showed the same extravagant devotion to one of the beautiful Gunnings ; and, if we can accept the story, she might have had the offer of another ducal coronet."

Miss Chudleigh was niece to Mrs. Hanmer, who lived in the country, and to whom she occasionally went on visits. Here she met Captain Hervey, an officer in the navy, and a son of the beautiful "Molly Lepel." Mrs. Hanmer conceived the idea of making up a match between Mr. Hervey and her friend. In 1744 this gentleman was serving in the fleet with Sir S. Norris, to the great anxiety of his beautiful mother, who writes anxiously to her friends about her "poor Augustus." However, in the same year we find him busy courting Miss Chudleigh, who, it is said, heartily disliked him. But all this time she found herself completely neglected or forgotten by her other noble admirer, the Duke of Hamilton, who left her letters unanswered. Piqued by this treatment, she at last agreed to make the lover happy, and a private and hurried marriage took place in August,

1744. There does not seem to have been occasion for mystery in the affair, as the match was not so unequal. A servant, named Cradock, afterwards describes how it all came about ; how the lady had come on a visit for the Winchester races, and how one evening the servants were sent out on various excuses, and the marriage took place "in the presence of two other witnesses." And it was remarkable that there was but one house in the village when the marriage was performed, at Laniston in the county of Southampton, in Mr. Murrill's chapel. "There were no lights in the church." In a few days the bridegroom had to get off to join the fleet. "I was to call him up," said the witness, "at five o'clock in the morning ; but when I went up to his bedroom I found them fast asleep, so I thought it a pity to disturb them for an hour." The happy pair, however, soon conceived a hearty dislike to each other, when suddenly there occurred a truly romantic incident, which seems to belong to the domain of story-telling. There now arrived from abroad the Duke of Hamilton, who at once waited on his old flame and renewed his suit. To her horror and astonishment she found that he had been assiduous in writing, and that all his letters had been intercepted and kept back by her perfidious friend. It was stated that he at once offered his hand, which the lady was obliged to decline, without, however, being able to give him any satisfactory reason, for her

marriage had been kept completely concealed. She had even the mortification of receiving proposals from other noble persons, such as the Duke of Ancaster and Lord Howe, which she was also obliged to refuse, to the anger and puzzlement of her mother. To escape from her awkward situation this strange woman went abroad by herself, made intimate acquaintance with various potentates, such as the great Frederick, who talked and corresponded with her, and the Electress of Saxony, who, during her later troubles, wrote to her in this affectionate strain :

“ You have long experienced my love ; my revenue, my protection, my everything you may command. Come, then, my dear life, to an asylum of peace. Quit a country where, if you are bequeathed a cloak, some pretender may start up, and ruin you by law to prove it your property. Let me have you at Dresden.”

Returning home, she made that strange, eccentric figure at the court masquerades, exhibiting herself in an extraordinary costume, of which a print was actually published. It is said, too, she was greatly annoyed by the jealous attentions of her husband, who followed her everywhere, “ blighting all her enjoyment,” it was said in odd phrase, “ by the pestilential malignity of his presence.” He threatened to disclose the marriage. All this was romantic enough ; and the spectacle of this young and eccentric

lady masquerading it as an unmarried woman, all the while pursued by a jealous husband, was really entertaining. Her ambitious soul was still set on some brilliant match, and "her duke," as Lord Chesterfield noted, was still attached to her. Alarmed by the threats of her husband, she took a desperate step, went down to the little town where the marriage had taken place, and, after drawing off the attention of the clerk, contrived to tear out the passage in the register without discovery.

This step seems to have been taken in aid of another more extraordinary proceeding. The lady had succeeded in attracting the elderly Duke of Kingston, who had offered his hand, while her real husband was also eager to be set free. A suit was instituted before the Delegates for what was called "jactitation of marriage," that is, to call for the establishment and proof of the marriage. This suit may have been the genuine act of the husband, and the spoliation of the register may have been the means by which it was met and defeated. But it seems more likely to have been the act of both in collusion. The proof was not forthcoming, and the Delegates accordingly declared—what they could not help declaring—that no proof had been offered to them of any ceremony having taken place. This clumsy device it was later determined to turn to profit. The "civilians," however, who were consulted

on the point, affirmed that this decision of theirs would effectually protect their client from danger. Accordingly the marriage she had contrived with the Duke of Kingston took place. It was performed on the 8th day of March, 1769, in the church of Saint Margaret, Westminster.

“The Most Noble *Evelyn Pierrepont*, Duke of Kingston, a Bachelor, and the *Honourable Elizabeth Chudleigh*, of Knightsbridge, in Saint Margaret’s, Westminster, a *Spinster*, were married by special license of the Archbishop of Canterbury, this 8th day of March, 1769, by me, *Samuel Harper*, of the British Museum.

“This marriage was solemnised between us,

“KINGSTON.

“ELIZABETH CHUDLEIGH.”

All the stages in this business are puzzling and somewhat extraordinary. As the question of the previous marriage had been raised, and was public, there was surely ground for awkward suspicion ; and this again makes it unlikely that she herself had stirred in the matter. As the King and Queen, and many noble persons, wore the wedding favours at the marriage, it is likely that she was looked upon as an ill-used or persecuted person, and that her friends felt bound to stand by her.

All, however, turned out successfully. But not long after the marriage, the duke, who was old, was struck by paralysis, and died. His wife was somewhat troubled by the terms of a will which he had made in her favour, and was conceived in a generous spirit. But she did not relish the forfeiture attendant on her marrying for the third time ; or, as her husband fancied, for the second time. A conveniently useful solicitor, who was in her interest, was required by her to suggest the making of a new will. The duke had sunk into a state in which he seemed scarcely conscious of what he was doing, and the solicitor refused to open the matter to him. By the existing will, she received the whole life use of his property, and this lady, who had actually committed a felony, was now become a duchess, with a large fortune and the world before her. She now began to exhibit that taste for displaying herself and her eccentricities before a foreign audience which somehow seems to characterise all women of her type, such as Queen Caroline and Queen Christina, who, perhaps, found that foreign countries were tolerant of their odd behaviour, or, at least, indifferent. She found the way to Rome, where she was received with distinguished honours by Pope Ganganelli, and lodged in one of the cardinals' palaces. One of the next freaks was the building of a large pleasure-yacht, which, at much trouble and expense, was brought up the river,

to the astonishment of the Romans, who gathered in crowds to stare at it.

But during her absence, a catastrophe was preparing in England which was to destroy her. The duke's nephew, Mr. Evelyn Meadows, son of Lady Travers Pierrepont, had naturally resented his exclusion from his uncle's will. By a curious fatality or infatuation, Mrs. Cradock, the surviving witness in the Hervey marriage, had been stupidly treated with much indignity, and refused assistance, beyond a trifling allowance of 20*l.* a year. She told her story, and all she knew, to the nephew, who lost no time in preferring a bill of indictment against the duchess, which was duly found. In this she was ludicrously charged with having, by "force of arms," married the duke, at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, her other husband being alive. A true bill was found, on which news the duchess hurried home, having, it was said, to threaten her banker with a pistol, to extract supplies of money. On her way she was seized with a serious illness, from which she with difficulty recovered, and finally halted at Calais to survey the dangerous situation. Here she was safe, and took counsel with her legal advisers.

The trial of a duchess in Westminster Hall was exciting and unusual, and caused much speculation. The unlucky lady, however, was assured of an

acquittal, her advisers being confident that the decree of "jactitation of marriage" would protect her.

Foote, whose trade it was to bring everyone that was noted for eccentricity or was the talk of the town on the stage, must have been the plague and terror of his day. The professional joker is ever more or less of a time-server, with little loyalty; for, as was said of the player, "those who live to please, must please to live," and he must sacrifice his friend to his joke when necessary. But the professional lampooner is worse. Again, it would be curious to give a list, taken from his plays, of those whose lives he had made wretched and ridiculous. It would seem that he little differed from the Ashes and other black-mailers who have flourished before and since, though Foote did not indeed obtain his profits directly from the victims, but from the public who flocked to see the exhibition.

The wit had prepared a piece called "A Trip to Calais," in which the duchess was introduced as Lady Kitty Crocodile, and held up to ridicule. There were two things that might have protected her: her sex and the fact that she was in serious peril. She could not send out "and buy a cudgel," which Johnson had found an effective remedy. One of her friends was Lord Mountstuart, son of the Earl of Bute, who waited on Foote to protest, and was shown the play by him, and, further, allowed to take it away to show to the duchess.

“Her grace saw the play,” says Foote, “and in consequence I saw her grace. Her grace could not discover,” he adds, “which your lordship will, I dare say, readily believe, a single trait in the character that resembled herself.” There was here an exquisite stroke of irony, though, of course, there was enough in the intention, in the character, and in naming the place, Calais, to make the public apply the satire. Foote stated this in his appeal to the Chamberlain, and urged him to let the piece be performed. It was, however, stated that he had offered to suppress the piece on payment of 2000*l*. It must be said that if this offer had been made, it did not fall within the description of black-mailing. Foote was following the regular practice of his life. He reckoned on making his regular profit out of his play. If the duchess wished it suppressed it was only fair that she should make up his loss to him. On the other hand, Walpole and Garrick both declare that the duchess actually *offered to buy him off for 2000*l*.*, and that price he had declined. This version, however, must have come from Foote himself. It must be said that there is a good deal to support the duchess’s case. An old clergyman, Mr. Foster, who had been tutor to Mr. E. Montagu, came forward with an affidavit, in which he swore: “That in consequence of the threat to perform the ‘Trip to Calais,’ he waited on Mr. Foote, and remonstrated with him on the extreme

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barbarity of such an attack, at such a particular juncture. That Mr. Foote had only agreed to suppress the piece on his receiving from the duchess the sum of 2000*l*."

"Foote now," says the duchess's biographer, "opened a new negotiation with the duchess, causing it to be intimated to her, 'that it was in his power to publish, if not to perform; but that, were his expenses reimbursed (and the sum which her grace had formerly offered him would do the business) he would desist.' Foote, finding that she began to yield, pressed his desire incessantly; and she had actually provided bills to the amount of 1600*l*., which she would have given Foote, but for the following circumstance: The Earl of Peterborough, Doctor Isaac Schomberg, the Rev. Mr. Foster, and Mr. Field, the solicitor, were alternately consulted, and they severally reprobated the demand as a scandalous imposition, with which it would be weakness to comply. Still, the duchess dreaded the pen, almost as much as the humour of Foote. In this juncture, the Reverend Mr. Jackson, who was at that time editor of a political paper, being asked his opinion of the demand made by Foote, returned this answer: 'Instead of complying with it, your grace should obtain complete evidence of the menace and demand, and then consult your counsel whether a prosecution will not lie for endeavouring to extort

money by threats.' This answer struck the Earl of Peterborough and Mr. Foster very forcibly, as in perfect coincidence with their own opinions. His grace the Duke of Ancaster also accorded in idea. Mr. Jackson was then solicited to wait on Mr. Foote. Mr. Jackson consented to be the champion, on the condition, 'that the duchess would give her honour never to retract her determination not to let Foote extort from her one single guinea.' Subscribing to this condition, Mr. Jackson waited on Mr. Foote, at his house in Suffolk Street, adjoining the Haymarket Theatre. After the usual ceremonies, Mr. Jackson told him, 'that he came as a friend of the Duchess of Kingston, and wished to be favoured with a categorical answer to this question, whether Mr. Foote meant to publish the piece which the Chamberlain had refused to license, called 'A Trip to Calais?'' Mr. Foote was about to enter into a long detail respecting the vast expense which had been incurred, when Mr. Jackson interrupted him thus : ' If, sir, you mean, by informing me of the expense, to intimate an expectation that the whole, or any part of it, should be defrayed by the duchess, I fairly tell you that you will find yourself mistaken ; she will not give you one guinea.' Foote endeavoured to turn this off by a laugh. Mr. Jackson, therefore, finally repeated it, when Mr. Foote said, 'Oh, I shall certainly

publish the piece, unless the Duchess will consider the heavy loss which I shall sustain. But why the devil does Isaac Schomberg interfere? We should hunt down these *reps* of quality in couples.'

"Mr. Jackson, on this, wished Mr. Foote a good-morning, and was about to retire, when Foote put his hand on his shoulder, and said: 'What! and so I am to be attacked if I publish 'The Trip to Calais.' Mr. Jackson replied: 'The publication will be an attack from you, Mr. Foote, the effect of which, I, as the friend of the duchess, will do my utmost to prevent.' Here the interview ended."

The duchess could not have chosen a better or more unscrupulous agent than this Jackson, who was known as "Dr. Viper," who seems to have plainly told Foote that he should be assailed in the newspapers. The result of this wholesome intimation was manifested at once.

The intervention of this emissary seems to have completely changed the aspect of affairs. The histrionic *spadassin* seems to have been intimidated. To our surprise, we find the man, whose friends were boasting of his having refused all offers, of a sudden writing to his intended victim to propose a surrender. The man, in fact, who was about to assault, now begs for mercy. This appeal was as follows:

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON.

"MADAM,

"A member of the Privy Council, and a friend of your grace's (he has begged me not to mention his name, but I suppose your grace will easily guess him), has just left me; he has explained to me, what I did not conceive, that the publication of the scenes in 'The Trip to Calais,' at this juncture, with the dedication and preface, might be of infinite ill-consequence to your affairs.

"I really, madam, wish you no ill, and should be sorry to do you an injury.

"I therefore give up to that consideration, what neither your grace's offers, nor the threats of your agents could obtain: the scenes shall not be published, nor shall anything appear at my theatre, or from me, that can hurt you—

"Provided the attack made on me in the newspapers does not make it necessary for me to act in defence of myself.

"Your grace will therefore see the necessity of giving proper directions.

"I have the honour to be

"Your grace's most devoted servant,

"SAM. FOOTE.

"North End, Sunday, August 13th, 1755."

The duchess had him in her power, and could not restrain her exultation. The tone of her reply is astonishing; but, allowing for a native coarseness of phrase, the hits in it are just and well-deserved.

TO MR. FOOTE.

"SIR,

"I was at dinner when I received your ill-judged letter. As there is little consideration required, I shall sacrifice a moment to answer it.

"A member of your Privy Council can never hope to be of a lady's cabinet.

"I know too well what is due to my own dignity, to enter into a compromise with an extortionable assassin of private reputation. If I before abhorred you for your slander, I now despise you for your concessions; it is a proof of the illiberality of your satire, when you can publish or suppress it as best suits the needy convenience of your purse. You first had the cowardly baseness to draw the sword, and, if I sheath it, until I make you crouch like the subservient vassal as you are, then is there no spirit in an injured woman, nor meanness in a slanderous buffoon.

"To a man my sex alone would have screened me from attack; but I am writing to the descendant of a merry-andrew, and prostitute the name of manhood by applying it to Mr. Foote.

"Clothed in my innocence as in a coat of mail, I am proof against a host of foes ; and conscious of never having intentionally offended a single individual, I doubt not but a brave and generous people will protect me from the malevolence of a theatrical assassin. You shall have cause to remember that, though I would have given liberally for the relief of your necessities, I scorn to be bullied into a purchase of your silence.

"There is something, however, in your pity at which my nature revolts. To make me an offer of pity, at once betrays your insolence and your vanity. I will keep the pity you send until the morning before you are turned off, when I will return it by a Cupid, with a box of lip-salve, and a choir of choristers shall chaunt a stave to your requiem.

" E. KINGSTON.

" Kingston House, Sunday, 13th August.

" P.S.— You would have received this sooner, but the servant has been a long time writing it."

Foote's reply extorted the admiration of his own and succeeding generations. Many thought it a masterpiece of wit, and some superior to Pope's lines on Lord Hervey.

TO THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON.

“MADAM,

“Though I have neither time nor inclination to answer the illiberal attacks of your agents, yet a public correspondence with your grace is too great an honour for me to decline. I can’t help thinking but it would have been prudent in your grace to have answered my letter before dinner, or at least postponed it to the cool hour of the morning ; you would then have found that I had voluntarily granted that request which you had endeavoured, by so many different ways, to obtain.

“Lord Mountstuart, for whose amiable qualities I have the highest respect, and whose name your agents first unnecessarily produced to the public, must recollect, when I had the honour to meet him at Kingston House, by your grace’s appointment, that, instead of begging relief from your charity, I rejected your splendid offers to suppress the ‘Trip to Calais,’ with the contempt they deserved. Indeed, madam, the humanity of my royal and benevolent master, and the public protection, have placed me much above the reach of your bounty.

“But why, madam, put on your coat of mail against me ? I have no hostile intentions. Folly, not vice, is the game I pursue. In those scenes which you so unaccountably apply to yourself, you must

observe that there is not the slightest hint at the little incidents of your life, which have excited the curiosity of the Grand Inquest for the county of Middlesex. I am happy, madam, however, to hear, that your robe of innocence is in such perfect repair ; I was afraid it might have been a little the worse for the wearing ; may it hold out to keep you warm the next winter.

“The progenitors your grace has done me the honour to give me, are, I presume, merely metaphorical persons, and to be considered as the authors of my muse, and not of my manhood : a merry-andrew and a prostitute are no bad poetical parents, especially for a writer of plays ; the first to give the humour and mirth, the last to furnish the graces and powers of attraction. Prostitutes and players too must live by pleasing the public ; not but your grace may have heard of ladies, who, by private practice, have accumulated amazing great fortunes. If you mean that I really owe my birth to that pleasant connection, your grace is grossly deceived. My father was, in truth, a very useful magistrate and respectable country gentleman, as the whole county of Cornwall will tell you. My mother, the daughter of Sir Edward Goodere, Bart., who represented the county of Hereford ; her fortune was large, and her morals irreproachable, till your grace condescended to stain them ; she was upwards of fourscore years when she died, and, what will surprise your grace, was never

married but once in her life. I am obliged to your grace for your intended present on the day, as you politely express it, when I am to be turned off. But where will your grace get the Cupid to bring me the lip-salve ? That family, I am afraid, has long quitted your service.

“ Pray, madam, is not *Jackson* the name of your female confidential secretary ? and is not she generally clothed in black petticoats made out of your weeds ?

So mourned the dame of Ephesus her love.

“ I fancy your grace took the hint when you last resided in Rome ; you heard there, I suppose, of a certain Joan, who was once elected a Pope, and, in humble imitation, have converted a pious parson into a chambermaid. The scheme is new in this country, and has doubtless its particular pleasures. That you may never want the benefit of the clergy in every emergence, is the sincere wish of your Grace’s most devoted and obliged humble servant,

“ SAMUEL FOOTE.”

By a strange reverse, from that hour Foote, the great mimic and flourishing satirist, was to be a ruined man ; and it is strange that he who had all his life flourished on ridicule and libels, should have himself fallen a victim to a charge of an atrocious kind. His character, indeed, was cleared, and the

case against him broke down completely. But, as is usual in such cases, it is difficult to "get over," as it is called, such an accusation, and he was too old to live it down.

Not less curious is it that the three performers in the business should have met with a disastrous fate. Parson Jackson, turning his attention to the wrongs of his country, was involved in treasonable courses, and gave occasion to that unique and tragic scene in the court of justice, where he poisoned himself, and actually died in the dock, uttering the dramatic words from "Venice Preserved," "*We have deceived the Senate.*" Foote, broken in spirit and fortune, resigning his theatre, set out for the Continent, but died, on his road, at Dover.

A letter of Foote's, written during his troubles to a friend who had aided him, is so highly significant of the coarse standard of gratitude in his mind, that it must be quoted. Garrick had been interesting himself with the editors of various papers, the *Chronicle* and *Post*, whose impartiality and aid he might, on public grounds, have fairly counted on. After profuse thanks to Garrick, he writes: "I have directed Jewell to advertise all my performances in the *Morning Post*; and if the gentleman who is suffered to be the editor should again turn his thoughts to the drama, me and my stage he may ever command."

The unusual ceremony at the duchess's trial was an imposing one. The day appointed for the solemn event was April 15th, 1776. The Queen was present. A procession entered, headed by her Lord Steward. The accused was attended by her three ladies, by a physician and an apothecary. She made three reverences on her knees while the indictment was being read. Her only defence was the one before mentioned of the "jactitation," though she added that she was under age when married, and had scarcely ever lived with her husband. By the other side it was proved that this was not the case. Friends, too, like Cæsar Hawkins, "the eminent civilian," and Lord Barrington, proved that she had made no concealment of the marriage to the former. She declared, in her odd way: "Oh, for that matter, the ceremony has been a very scrambling, shabby affair; but I am as unwilling to swear that I am married as that I am not." She thereon read a long justification of her life and adventures. The peers found her guilty, the Duke of Newcastle thus qualifying his verdict—"erroneously, but not intentionally, guilty." She was then asked to answer her sentence, but a paper was handed up claiming "benefit of clergy." "Madam," she was addressed, "you are admitted to your clergy, but if you are ever found guilty again, the capital punishment will follow." She was accordingly discharged on the pay-

ment of her fees, and the pageant, or farce—the last of the kind exhibited—came to a close.

The freaks and extravagances that followed during her erratic course were of a strange and surprising sort. Though she was now only Mrs. Hervey, she insisted on being styled duchess; but later her husband succeeded to the title, and this fortunate woman was really Countess of Bristol.

Her first escapade was a grand expedition to St. Petersburg; for one of her passions was the cultivating intimacies with crowned heads, and she hoped to cement a friendship with the Empress Catherine. To prepare the way for her being received with favour, she despatched a present, a cargo of valuable pictures, which had belonged to her husband, and which were graciously accepted. The yacht started from Calais. Some of the incidents in this expedition have a strange Opéra-Comique flavour.

There was something exquisitely comic and grotesque in this; and the adventures of that odd ship's company, the Abbé and the English clergyman, and the singular charterer of the vessel, might have figured in a chapter of *Le Sage*.

“The arrangement of this suite depending, of course, on the will of the duchess, a whimsical assemblage of characters were blended. The captain and sailors of the ship being Frenchmen and Roman Catholics, a chaplain of their language and persuasion

was required to perform the pious offices necessary for the welfare of their souls. To be supplied in this particular, the duchess despatched a letter to Paris, soliciting a lady to recommend an ecclesiastic proper for the purpose. Among the different orders it was not a difficult matter to meet with a priest of the Order of Necessity ; and, it being probable that such a one only would embark on so singular an expedition, the choice fell on Monsieur l'Abbé Séchand. The duchess, to whom a new face and a novel adventure afforded great delight, received the glad tidings with a joyful countenance ; imparting to every visitor the elevated ideas she had formed of a person whom she had never seen, and for whose transcendent abilities she vouched, in a most authoritative style. At last Monsieur l'Abbé arrived ; for the sake of convenience not much troubled with baggage, the *diligence* being his carriage, and a violin his travelling companion. As this gentleman had the care of the souls of the captain and mariners committed to his charge, to the Rev. Mr. Foster was entrusted the direction of the duchess in spirituals. Two women, as attendants, a coachman at sea, and a footman in a cabin, completed the marine suite with which the duchess sailed for St. Petersburg. To say that she was grossly flattered on undertaking the expedition, would only be saying that she was supposed to abound in wealth ; for where is the rich without a flatterer ?

The voyage of the duchess was compared to the expedition of Cleopatra; a Marc Antony only was wanting to render the comparison perfect.

“Favoured by a wind which blew as the wishes of the duchess inclined, she arrived at Elsineur in twelve days from the time of her leaving Calais; and, delaying as little as circumstances would permit on her passage, she soon reached St. Petersburg. Her arrival being announced, her reception was certainly favourable; the Empress dispensed with public forms, the interview between her Majesty and the duchess being at the country palace appropriated to the purposes of seclusion. The novelty of an English lady braving the billows of the Baltic, and defying, as it were, the boisterous elements of the north, to pay a compliment to the reigning sovereigness, excited admiration in many, curiosity in all. This very curiosity and admiration were sufficient for the duchess; gratifying her vanity, they compensated her toils. Still more: the Empress assigned a mansion for her residence. Her ship was commanded under the government care; and a hurricane arising which occasioned it to suffer considerable damage, it was repaired by express order of the Empress.

“Count Chernichoff was presented to the duchess as an exalted character, to whom she ought, in policy, to pay her particular *devoirs*. She felt the force of the representation, and sent him two pictures. As

little skilled in painting as in music, she was a total stranger to the value of these pieces. They happened to be originals, by Raphael and Claude Lorrain. The count was soon apprised of this ; and on the arrival of the duchess at St. Petersburg he waited on her grace, professed his thankfulness for the present, at the same time assuring the duchess, ‘that the pictures were estimated at a value, in Russian money, amounting to 10,000*l.* English.’ The duchess, who, the moment before he let this secret escape from his lips, had arranged her features with a smile of complacency, instantly changed colour, and could, with the utmost difficulty, veil her chagrin. She told the count, ‘that she had other pictures which she should consider as an honour were he to accept them ; that the two paintings in his possession were particularly the favourites of her departed lord ; but that the count was extremely gracious in permitting them to occupy a space in his palace until her mansion was properly prepared for decoration.’ This manœuvre did not succeed. The count has the pictures at this moment ; and the duchess, in her will, has actually introduced a history of the manner in which they became possessed by Count Chernichoff ; referring, at the same time, to the testimony of a Mr. Moreau, in proof of the paintings having been only committed to the care of the count in trust.”

The description in the will of the behaviour of this count is in her own characteristic style.

“I give and bequeath as an act of justice to the said Charles Meadows, to be reputed an heirloom of Thoresby, the two pictures which are in the possession of the Count de Chernichoff through the misunderstood interpretation of a letter which he received and which he maintains to have been presented to him, viz. one of the said pictures known and attested by Carlo Marriott for an original of Raphael, the Holy Family, and the other a Claude Lorrain. It is said in the said letter that these two pictures were much esteemed and admired by the late Duke of Kingston. I set a great value on them, and I trusted them to his care, the expression in French was, ‘*Je vous les confie*’ (I trust them to you); this circumstance can be attested by Major Moreau, at that time my secretary, who wrote that letter signed by me; they have been demanded and refused several times, and particularly once by my painter, Mr. Le Sure, who presented the request in writing signed by me.

“I give and bequeath to —— the model of a sleeping figure, the original whereof is now at Rome, which was, or is thought to have been, seen at the said Comte de ——, having been brought from Thoresby in Nottinghamshire by Moiett, my gardener, who shipped it on board a ship which brought him and the figure to St. Petersburg where

he himself delivered it, and where he saw it often and for a long time in the courtyard of the said count, before the house, and during many months in the said count's garden, in a case without a cover. I have kept his attestation thereof, copy whereof I annexed to this present act. I order my executors and trustees to offer all the pictures of my house at St. Petersburg to her Imperial Majesty if she will accept of them, and pay for them unto my said executors the sum of 100,000 roubles (about 25,000*l.*)."

She next purchased an estate near St. Petersburg, for about 12,000*l.*; and gave it the name of Chudleigh. It was an invariable rule that foreigners could not be admitted. What was to be done with the estate? Besides catching fish and cutting down wood, it promised not to turn to any advantageous account. The duchess, however, always disposed to be misled when flattered by following her own inclination, was induced to believe that a fortune, which she did not want, might be obtained by a means which she had no occasion to use, namely, the erection of works for making brandy. This was a whimsical transition of ideas.

"This disappointment in ambition, and a final dislike of the distillery project, occasioned a resolution to return to Calais. Disputes in the household had also arisen, which caused this resolution to be more

determined than ordinary. The salary of Mr. Foster, a pittance for a man of learning, being only 100*l.* a year, was in arrears. Years and merit pleaded in vain. A trifle was the subject of dispute, and the Empress being informed of it, offered poor Foster a retreat for life, and he quitted the duchess with this sarcasm, in the Spartan style, 'I am old, not mean.' Séchand next broke forth with vehemence. He had received more promises than there are numbers in a lottery, and not one of them had produced a prize. His salary was in arrears, and payment was formally demanded; agents on both sides interfered, but without effecting anything."

She presently returned to Europe and selected France as her abode, buying houses and estates, and indulging in absurd caprices, meanness and stinginess being curiously mixed up with her capricious extravagances. This type of character 'is not uncommon, and a likeness to it is to be found in men like Lord Henry Seymour, the Bishop of Derry, the Duke of Brunswick, and others—sometimes spiteful or mean, side by side with an apparent liberality. This sort of combination is best shown by the instance of a man who flung a sovereign into a mixed crowd for the pleasure of seeing the savage contest that would follow.

One of the founders of the house of Rothschild used to declare that no entertainment known ever so

well repaid expenditure as the giving a beggar a sovereign, as though in mistake for a shilling. The struggle to conceal joy and suppress the anxiety, and trepidation from fear of discovery, the ludicrous eagerness to get away, the absence of thanks—all this, he said, was the richest entertainment; and he exhorted everyone to try the experiment.

One of our heroine's oddities was a capricious selection of favourites chiefly from the lower class of "dependants." She thus adopted a young man in the navy. He fell into bad health, and the duchess invited him to Calais, offering to have a residence in the country prepared where he might recover at leisure. A carriage was sent for him, and, to his astonishment and horror, he found himself conveyed to the public hospital! A son of a French president, Mr. Cocove, she adopted in the same way, and, after some years' attendance, dismissed him, saying he should have 20,000*l.* 'That, I think, should content you.' Mr. Cocove replied, "It most assuredly would;" and he only wished to know the means of acquiring such a sum. The duchess explained herself thus: "I will write to Vergennes, my friend, and get him to obtain for you a considerable grant of land between Calais and Dunkirk. It is a soil fit for the growth of Scotch-firs. I will be at the expense of planting, and, in about *thirty* or *forty years* the plantation will produce a fortune. Here was generosity with a vengeance!

Hope was first artfully raised by the hand of flattery, then unfeelingly depressed by that of disappointment."

A sister of this gentleman she also adopted and took to St. Petersburg, and whom she shut up there in strict imprisonment for forty-one days. The unlucky girl, however contrived to escape to the French ambassador's.

Her extravagances were multiplied quite out of proportion to her income, which was no more than 16,000*l.* a year. With a reckless extravagance she purchased from the French Kings, or others, a large estate, and a palace with nearly three hundred rooms or beds, stocked with abundance of game: 55,000*l.* was the price agreed upon, of which she succeeded in paying about half. Then, seized with a fit of economy, and a wish to turn her purchase into profit, she had a vast number of rabbits, with which the place was overrun, shot and sold. She had thus her Russian estate and her French one.

Her death was quite in character. A lawsuit having been decided against her by the French courts, this threw her into a violent state of excitement, which caused her to burst a blood-vessel. From this she partially recovered; but a few days later, on the morning of August 26th, 1788, when she found herself unequal to getting up, a servant attempted to dissuade her. But her mistress said: "I am not very well, but I *will* rise. At your peril disobey me;

I will get up, and walk about the room. Ring for the secretary to assist me."

She was obeyed, dressed, and the secretary entered the chamber. The duchess then walked about, complained of thirst, and said: "I could drink a glass of my fine Madeira, and eat a slice of toasted bread. I shall be quite well afterwards; but let it be a large glass of wine."

The attendant reluctantly brought, and the duchess drank, the wine. She then said: "I am perfectly recovered; I knew the Madeira would do me good. My heart feels oddly. I will have another glass."

The servant here observed that such a quantity of wine, drank in the morning, might intoxicate rather than benefit. The duchess persisted in her orders, and, the second glass of Madeira being produced, she drank that also, and pronounced herself better. She then walked a little about the room, and afterwards said: "I will lie on the couch. I can sleep, and, after a sleep, I shall be entirely recovered."

"She sat on the couch, a female having hold of each hand. She appeared to have fallen into a sound sleep, until the woman found her hands colder than ordinary; an affright ensued; other domestics were rung for, and the duchess was found to have expired. Thus died Elizabeth Chudleigh, actually Countess

of Bristol, and, by the courtesy of foreign nations, styled Duchess of Kingston. She was a woman the leading features of whose character are more discoverable from a review of her conduct than from any delineation in the power of the pen to give. If she might be allowed to know herself, her own description of the mutability of her nature should pass for the truth. Her words were these: "I should detest myself if I were *two hours in the same temper.*"

Such was this very extraordinary personage. Even after her death she was to excite surprise and amusement; and an incomplete will which she left behind revealed once more her singular crotchets. Some English lawyers were sent for from London to Paris for the purpose, for which French notaries were also called in, as the duchess was said to have been naturalised as a Frenchwoman. These persons were detained in Paris for months, waiting till the time when, in her capricious moods, she might be inclined to take up the business.

She looked forward to this grand event of making her will, which, after her demise, she expected would cause a prodigious sensation. In this she resembled the late eccentric Duke of Brunswick, who found a piquant amusement in preparing testamentary documents, and beguiling interested persons with hopes that were to prove groundless. The duchess deter-

mined that hers should be a document that should excite attention, both in France and England. Accordingly, it was drawn up in an eccentric manner, according to English as well as French law. It was of the most elaborate character; the chief eccentricity being that the person selected as chief legatee was the Evelyn Meadows who had set in motion the law process which deprived her of her estate and dignities! All sorts of people, all over the world, were named in this singular hocus-pocus of vanity and oddity. A vast quantity of the gifts were without the names of the recipients. It begins pompously :

“This is the last will and testament of me, the most noble Elizabeth, Duchess of Kingston, in England; Countess of Warth, in the Electorate of Bavaria; and Duchess of Kingston, in Russia; daughter of the late Colonel Thomas Chudleigh, of Hall, in the Parish of Harford, in the County of Devon; and of his wife, Harriet, daughter of — Chudleigh, Esq., of Chalmington, in the County of Dorset; which I make in manner following :”

After various dispositions, and one of 15,000*l.* “to Evelyn Meadows, comes the following :

“And I also give and bequeath unto said Charles Meadows all the *communion plate* which belonged to the chapel of Thoresby, and which was taken away with the other vessels, and sent *by mistake* to St. Petersburg in Russia; and my gold dessert plate,

with the case of knives, forks, and spoons of gold; and four golden salt-cellars, all engraved with the arms of Kingston; and also one large salt-cellar called Queen Elizabeth's salt-cellar, together with all my other gold and gilt plate whatsoever, either for use or ornament; and likewise the following plate, viz. one large cistern, with ornaments, weighing 3606 ounces; two large silver vessels to put wine in, with their pedestals and appurtenances; one large cover, one middle piece weighing 632 oz. 4 dwts.; two large tureens, with covers weighing 1342 oz. 5 dwts., and their dishes, etc.; and I also give him the several pieces of cannon, and the ships and vessel on Thoresby Lake; all the copper fountains, locks, bolts, bars, bells, and all other furniture in and about the houses, gardens, stables, and houses thereunto belonging to be reputed as appendages of the said house."

After some legacies to various inhabitants of Calais, she gave the interest of a sum of 500 louis "to purchase an annual rent of 100 louis d'or for ever for the benefit of the two schools at Calais, for the education of all the children which shall be brought there for instruction according to the rules of those schools newly established, and the rent to be paid one half each to each of the said schools. In the same town she wished to be built a prison for the prisoners of war and those for debt, in order to

keep them separate from the criminals ; and if there should remain any money over and above these disposals, "they shall employ a sufficient quantity for the building of a water-mill to grind flour (as at certain times, when the wind fails, the poor are liable to be without bread), which shall grind gratis for the poor on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, under the inspection and direction of the mayor of the town ; and, lastly, the remainder to be employed by Mr. Haller in brilliants for Mademoiselle Hougherot, none of the diamonds to be under the weight of one carat."

Then follows a yet more singular bequest : " And I give, leave, and bequeath my hotel and garden adjacent, together with the stables, dependencies, and appurtenances situate at Calais, to the government, to be employed to make the resident of the commandant of the town of Calais for the time being—to be delivered after the furniture and fixtures shall be taken out—together with the wines and liquors which are in the cellar, which are to be left for the use of the first commandant who shall reside there. I give and bequeath the pictures in the gallery of the said hotel, painted by Mignard, to the Lord Mayor, aldermen, and commonalty of the city of London, begging their acceptance thereof, and that they would place them in the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion

House, which the lord mayor of the said city for the time being inhabits."

Such was this singular document, which, though signed, could not, of course, be proved.

THE BISHOP OF DERRY.

THE BISHOP OF DERRY.

SOME foundation would be found for Lady Townshend's or Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's speech, that "*God made men, women, and Herveys,*" in the career of that extraordinary nobleman, the Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry. He was a most singular being, offering a combination of oddity, cleverness, connoisseurship, and irregularity that defies classification.

This personage was the third son of the well-known Lord Hervey, but succeeded to "the full family honours," as the heralds put it. He was born in 1730, and lived till the year 1803. According to the fashion of the times in providing for the English clergyman who had sufficient political interest, he was appointed to an Irish bishopric (Cloyne) in 1767, and was promoted to the better-endowed see of Derry in 1778. Now he showed a sort of mad patriotism, becoming more Hibernian than the

Hibernians themselves; and when the volunteer movement was started he joined all their first demonstrations, and was escorted from Derry to Dublin by a troop of volunteer cavalry, receiving military honours as he passed through every town. This fit appears to have subsided; for in a short time he wholly abandoned the country, and his see, and betook himself to Italy. He had succeeded to his brother's title and estates in 1779, the year after he obtained his rich see; so that he was now possessed of great wealth, was the Earl of Bristol and Lord Bishop of Derry.

Now fairly began his curious career. Establishing himself at Rome, he became the centre and attraction of all that was artistic, buying pictures, patronising artists, and surrounding himself with all the needy crew who then found their profit in ministering to the caprices of a wealthy "Milord anglais." To be the "patron" of art was to be artistic. He lavished his money with a recklessness that was surprising. He was soon seen at Naples—at the court which was ruled by Lady Hamilton—and people were surprised, though not scandalised, at the spectacle of an Irish bishop joining in all the disorderly scenes of that ill-regulated court. His costume betokened the same eccentricity, and was more like a fancy dress than that of an orthodox English bishop. He always wore, we are told, a white hat

edged with purple, with a coat of crimson silk or velvet, a black sash spangled with silver, and purple stockings. This amazing costume, which might befit carnival time, was gravely accepted by the natives as the regular dress of an English bishop. He was known to all as "the Court Bishop." He had his regular box at the opera; indeed, beyond the *bizarre* dress, he seems to have made no pretence of sustaining the character. He talked in the sceptical mode that was then in fashion.

Mr. Lawless, afterward Lord Cloncurry, who was then travelling in Italy, gives a curious account of this odd prelate. He reports that the bishop made these large purchases of works of art with a view to profit. All the Roman nobility were in serious difficulties owing to the Revolution, and were glad to sell their paintings and curiosities to the wealthy English. The bishop, when his handsome quarterly remittance arrived, would lay it nearly all out in such purchases; but at the end of the quarter he had not a sixpence left, and hardly credit enough to secure him a bottle of wine. Then followed a dispersion of his collection as rapidly as it was gathered; but, as might be expected, at a heavy discount.

Another of this bishop's freaks, which were always characteristic, was his visit to the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse. He was denied admission on the ground that the community were at dinner, on which

he sent in word that he was a bishop. The doors were thrown open, the brethren welcomed him, and on their knees demanded his blessing, which he gave them all very graciously. It was to this monastery that he probably paid a second visit, when he was not so cordially received, owing, perhaps, to his behaviour and to the trick he had played the brothers being discovered. At least he wrote in the visitors' book the following eccentric record of his treatment :

“If second thoughts are best, second visits are not so. My son and I arrived here on the 18th December (1790) and left it the Monday following. The general refused me a sight of the library, and the cook the necessary food. Perhaps I outstayed their liking. I return—to use a fashionable expression—more penetrated with cold than with the civility of the inhabitants, more stuffed with compliments than with food ; and when I see two swaggering Capuchins, with their paunches as full as their wallets, I cannot help thinking of the scriptural phrase, ‘He hath filled the hungry with good things ; and the rich He hath sent empty away.’” He was fond of this profane form of quotation.

At Ickworth, in Suffolk, he had built a handsome villa, after the Italian model, which he employed artists from that country to enrich and decorate. Some of the stucco-work outside was of the most elaborate and delicate kind, and had to be protected by glass. It

was said, indeed, that he laid out 12,000*l.* a year for several years on this expensive hobby. The place is still shown, but offers few tokens of this costly outlay.

He was not very strict in the selection of his acquaintances ; his most intimate friends and correspondents being the celebrated or notorious Lady Hamilton and a German lady, Madame de Lichtenau, who was well known at the courts and chancelleries of Europe, and kept up a correspondence with very celebrated personages. This lady's letters were lately published, and we find among them some from the Bishop of Derry, written in a kind of reckless or rollicking strain. Madame de Lichtenau was at Naples about the year 1795, and there became the *intime* of Lady Hamilton and her "set." Thus gallantly would write our bishop :

" O Emma, who would e'er be wise
If madness be loving of thee ?

" Yesterday we dined on Mount Vesuvius ; to-day we were to have dined on its victim, Pompeii ; but even Bertolenicco himself, that weather soothsayer, did not foresee this British weather. In the meantime, all this week and the next is replete with projects ; so God only knows when I can worship again my Diana of Ephesus.

" BRISTOL."

"Lovel and I were on Vesuvius. He goes, like a true parson, only to eat the better. I foresee he will once more fall into Midi's hands. Procyta will be another duo; for I hate large parties, as such, and especially females, unless they are phoenixes like yourself. Sweet Emma, adieu."

"EVER DEAREST EMMA,

"I went down to your opera-box two minutes after you left it; and should have seen you the morning of your departure but was detained in the arms of *Murphy*, as Lady Eden expresses it, and was too late. You say nothing of the adorable queen. I hope she has not forgotten me; but as Shakespeare says, 'who dotes must doubt;' and I verily believe her the very best edition of a woman I ever saw. I mean of such as are not in folio.

"B.

"You see I am but the second letter in your alphabet, though you are the first of mine."

Speaking of a passport, he says: "This I know, if they have refused it, they are d——d fools for their pains; for never was a Malta orange better worth squeezing or sucking; and if they leave me to die without a tombstone over me to tell the contents, *tant pis pour eux.*"

To the same correspondent he described "that despicable, odious family of the Bourbons, the head of which is now at Verona, where we left him eating two capons a day, and, what is more, dressing them himself in a superb kitchen—the true chapel of a Bourbon prince." In this scurrility there is some liveliness. To this lady he sent a present of a complete suite of English-made mahogany furniture.

Some of the stories in circulation about him showed him to be coarse, rude, and ill-natured as, when the famous Mrs. Billington was singing, one of the English princes, then on his travels, added his voice to hers, the bishop was heard to exclaim, "Pray cease, madam, you have to carry an ass." And when the same prince favoured the company with a song, the bishop said to a lady near him: "Fine braying, not singing." His wit, however, was shown in his repartee to the King of Prussia, with whom he was dining, and who talked of the ambition of England. The King, as is well known, had taken subsidies, but had kept neutral. The conversation turning on capons as a delicate bird, and the Bishop's opinion being asked, he replied, "that he disliked all neutral animals, be they ever so delicate."

When the Revolution broke out, and the French swept over Italy, they seized on all his pictures and works of art, and the luckless bishop was flung into prison as a spy. On this, an appeal was drawn up

by all the artists in Rome (English, German, and French), describing his generous patronage, and begging his release. We find him at liberty soon after ; so their intercessions may have been effectual.

At last his not very creditable life was to come to an end ; and this true Hervey was to die in a foreign land. In the year 1803 he expired at Albano, of the gout, at the age of 73, in a wretched peasant's cottage, abandoned by all, strangely enough even by the gang of artistic hangers-on, fiddlers, and other parasites, who fought with each other round his bed, and neglected him cruelly. There was a strange, yet not uncommon, infatuation in this ; for they knew he had bequeathed them his property. A few hours before his death he tore up his will, and disappointed them all.

THE STORY OF PEG WOFFINGTON.

THE STORY OF PEG WOFFINGTON.

THE life of this actress has been often told and dramatised, but mixed with much that is romantic and even unfounded. The facts of her life are to be best ascertained from those who were acquainted with her in the course of professional business. Such were Victor, stage-manager at Dublin; Chetwood; Hitchcock, who filled the office of prompter; and Davies and Tate Wilkinson—actors who knew her well, and whose accounts are satisfactory and authentic.

Hitchcock, living in Dublin, and likely enough to gather up the true traditions, describes, "from the most authentic information," Madame Violante in 1727 as taking a large house in Fownes Court, off Dame Street, and which had gardens reaching back to Crow Street, and had belonged to Chief Justice Whitchel Whitshed. Here she exhibited tumblers

and rope-dancers ; but this show not succeeding, she formed a troupe of clever children, and taught them to perform the "Beggar's Opera" before it had been put on the regular stage of the city. This drew all in the town. Hitchcock was enabled to recover the names of some of these little prodigies.

"Woffington, in her infancy," says Mr. Taylor, "was actually one of the children who were appended to the feet of Madame Violante, a famous dancer on the tight-rope in Dublin. This fact I learned from the late Duke of Leeds, who told me he had been assured of it by Mr. King, the celebrated comic actor."

This little girl was literally running about the streets when she was but two years old, and Lee Lewes tells us that "her mother earned a scanty livelihood for her two daughters by hawking fruit about the streets of Dublin, with the youngest (later the Hon. Mrs. Cholmondeley) on her breast, and Peggy trotting by her side. I have met with more than one in Dublin who assured me that they remember to have seen the lovely Peggy with a little dish upon her hand, and without shoes to cover her delicate feet, crying through College Green, Dame Street, and other parts of that end of the town, 'All this fine young salad for a halfpenny.'"

She was "taken up" by a gang of fellows, who, when she was scarcely nine years old, were attracted

by her loveliness and beauty; and she then secured an engagement from the Elrigtons at Margaret Street Theatre, having been recommended by Mr. Coffey, an adapter of the well-known "Devil to Pay," and who had taught her the part of Nell.

Here also she danced between the acts with Delamain and Moreau; but on February 12th, 1737, she made her first appearance in a regular speaking character, as Ophelia. "She now began to unveil those beauties and display those graces and accomplishments which for so many years afterwards charmed mankind. Her ease, elegance, and simplicity, in Polly, in the Beggars' Opera, with the natural manner of her singing the songs, pleased much. Her girls were esteemed excellent, and her Miss Lucy, in the "Virgin Unmasked," brought houses. But she never displayed herself to more advantage than in characters where she assumed the other sex. Her figure, which was a model of perfection, then free from restraints, appeared in its natural form. All this time it was reported of her that her filial duty to her old hawking mother was remarkable. When a child, she had always brought her every little present her talents secured; and, when she came into the enjoyment of a regular salary, she at once settled 40*l.* a year on her, and *two changes of apparel*. Her care of her little sister was not less marked. In 1739, being now

"in high estimation," Miss Woffington, by desire of several persons of quality, appeared for the first time as Sir Harry Wildair, and charmed the town to an unaccustomed degree. Some lines appeared in the public prints :

ON MISS WOFFINGTON'S PLAYING SIR HARRY WILDAIR.

Peggy, the darling of the men,
In Polly won each heart ;
But now she captivates again,
And all must feel the smart.

Her charms, resistless, conquer all,
Both sexes vanquished lie ;
And who to *Polly* scorned to fall,
By *Wildair* ravish'd, die.

This undramatic performance was the "subject of conversation in every polite circle, and fixed her reputation as an actress." It was given twenty nights, then considered a great run. It further secured her an engagement at Covent Garden, where she made her first appearance on November 6th, 1740, as Sylvia, in *The Recruiting Officer*. On this occasion, she was described as Miss Woffington ; but, on the second performance, she was announced as Mrs. Woffington, an odd but characteristic change. On the 21st, she appeared as Sir Harry Wildair.

At this time, Mr. Garrick came up to town, to follow the calling of a wine-dealer ; but, being much bitten with the theatre, fell desperately in love with

the gay actress. He was, indeed, one of her favoured admirers, and she had hopes that he would make her his wife. To her he addressed witty verses, but not, it would appear, the well-known song, "Lovely Peggy," which was by Sir C. Hanbury Williams. She was just twenty-two years old at this time. Her Sir Harry at once made her reputation high, though the remembrance of Wilks was still fresh; but it has been justly said by Mr. Cooke: "Where a woman, no doubt, personates a man *pro tempore*, as is the case in several of our stock comedies, the closer the imitation is made the more we applaud the performer, but always in the knowledge that the object before us is *a woman assuming the character of a man*; but, when this same woman totally usurps the male character, and we are left to try her merits merely as a man, without making the least allowance for the imbecilities of the other sex, we may safely pronounce that there is no woman, nor ever was a woman, who can fully supply this character. There is such a *reverse* in all the habits and modes of the two sexes, acquired from the very cradle upwards, that it is next to an impossibility for the one to resemble the other so totally as to escape detection."

Garrick had now made his brilliant first appearance (in 1741), and was admitted to be the first actor of his day. He was engaged, with Mrs. Woffington, for Dublin, where he had a most

brilliant season, to which, however, the lady materially contributed. Returning to London, a quarrel took place between the lovers. The lady was of an inconstancy which was incurable, and yet pressed the new actor to make her his wife. According to Macklin, who blackened Garrick on every occasion, Garrick shabbily backed out of his engagement; but, from the bitter verses discovered among his papers, reproaching her with her infidelities, it seems likely that he gave her up with reluctance.

Macklin used to relate how Garrick came to tell her of his restless nights on account of this implied promise; that he had been wearing the shirt of Dejanira. "Then throw it off at once," said the spirited actress. "From this moment I have done with you." He attempted to soothe her; but she was too independent, after such a declaration, to be reconciled. That this took place we may be convinced. It is like Garrick; and she, no doubt, reported it to Macklin. A caricature soon appeared in the print-shops.

There was a poor and clever hanger-on at Drury Lane, named Wilkinson, whose father, a clergyman, had been transported for celebrating "Fleet" marriages, and whom Mr. Rich, out of compassion, used to allow behind the scenes. This was an impudent, forward, but vivacious youth, whose vanity had been upset by the after-dinner praises of friends, for

whom he would recite, and mimic all the leading actors and actresses. This young fellow was, moreover, amusing, and was "taken up" by some men about town. He thus admirably introduces Mrs. Woffington :

"One day my old friend Captain Forbes had invited me to dine with him at The Bedford Arms ; and after a choice dinner, with plenty of good wine, etc., the captain said : 'Tate, we will go to the play,' and added that he wished to go behind the scenes ; but as I went there only on sufferance, I told him it was not in my power to oblige him. 'If so,' said my friend George, 'we will not separate, for I will treat you to the boxes.' Being jolly with the bottle, I assented ; and, when arrived at the theatre, I could not prevail on him to sit anywhere but in the stage-box. He was in full guard regimentals ; myself by no means dressed fit to appear as his companion ; but as he persisted, and led the way, I followed, and in the front of his Majesty's stage-box we were seated ; and, no more strange than true, the lower sides exhibited a beggarly account of empty boxes, and only a few persons were scattered in the front ones—not an extraordinary circumstance to relate then of an unfashionable night at Covent Garden Theatre. The play was 'The Confederacy.'

"Being in such a conspicuous situation, the eyes of the performers from behind the scenes were in-

stantaneously attracted on beholding a poor young lad—a mere dependant, skulking nightly behind the curtain—placed in a stage-box. They were, therefore, astonished at my audacity in usurping and possessing such a particular seat of distinction ; and a creature, too, that was destitute and soliciting for bread. They naturally concluded I had gained admittance by an order, and taken such a place by way of ignorant and impudent bravado, the which deserved chastisement. They sent and spoke to Mr. Rich, and it was agreed that Wilkinson should be instantly ordered from his improper situation. A messenger was sent to put this mandate from Mr. Rich in full force. The box-keeper came to me ; and Captain Forbes, warm with his wine and the insult offered to his friend, soon convinced the official messenger of his mistake ; and the box-keeper was sent back to assure Mr. Rich that Mr. Wilkinson was seated there by proper authority, as Captain Forbes, who was well known by being a constant box-attendant at their theatre, had paid ten shillings for admittance. This, I was well informed, caused a general green-room laugh of contempt at the expense of the poor poverty-struck gentleman in the stage-box. But, unfortunately, Mrs. Woffington, who acted Clarissa, having been frequently told that I was remarkable for *taking her off* (as the phrase was and is), came close to the stage-box, finishing her speech with such a sarcastic sneer at me as actually

made me draw back. My unfortunate star, sure, was then predominant, for at that moment a woman of the town, in the balcony above where I was seated, repeated some words in a remarkably shrill tone, which occasioned a general laugh. Like electricity it caught Mrs. Woffington's ear, whose voice was far from being enchanting. On perceiving the pipe squeak on her right hand, and being conscious of the insult she had then given apparently to me, it struck her comprehension so forcibly that she immediately concluded I had given the retort upon her in that open and audacious manner, to render her acting and tone ridiculous to the audience, as returning contempt for her devilish sneer. She again turned and darted her lovely eyes, though assisted by the furies, which made me look confounded and sheepish; all which only served to confirm my condemnation. When the scene was finished, and she had reached the green-room, she related my insolence in such terms as rendered me a subject of abuse, contempt, and hatred with all the company; but of that circumstance I was quite ignorant. At the instant I had, it is true, observed, to my mortification, Mrs. Woffington looked angry, but could not divine the real cause.

"The noon following, when I attended Mr. Rich's *levée*, I was kept in waiting a considerable time; but as that was and is the too common fate of distressed dependence, Patience was my friend and companion.

At last Mrs. Woffington passed through the room, where I was thus humiliated, and without a word, curtesy, or bow of her head, proceeded on to her sedan, from which she as haughtily returned; and, advancing towards me with queen-like steps, and viewing me most contemptuously, said: 'Mr. Wilkinson, I have made a visit this morning to Mr. Rich, to command and to insist on his not giving you any engagement whatever—no, not of the most menial kind in the theatre. Merit you have none; charity you deserve not; for if you did, my purse should give you a dinner. Your impudence to me last night, where you had with such assurance placed yourself, is one proof of your ignorance; added to that, I heard you echo my voice when I was acting; and I sincerely hope in whatever barn you are suffered as an unworthy stroller, that you will fully experience the same contempt you dared last night to offer me.' With a flounce and enraged features, without waiting or permitting me to reply, she darted once more into her chair. I really was so astonished, frightened, and bewildered that I knew not how to act or think, but was relieved from longer suspense and tedious waiting by a message from Rich, intimating that he could not see me at his *levée* either that day or in future, or listen to any engagement whatever; for my behaviour was too gross and rude to be justified, and I must immediately depart; but, the person added, I might

continue the liberty of the scenes during the season, with this proviso—that I should not on any account take the freedom to speak to Mr. Rich. I wished not, nor had the power to make an answer.

“When I went into the green-room a universal laugh of contempt ensued. Woffington was there. I had disturbed and offended her majesty; and therefore all her faithful servants, bee-like, joined to sting me, except Mr. Shuter, who saw my distress, and good-naturedly took me by the hand, led me to his dressing-room, and desired me not to be cast down, but observed I must not enter the green-room again, as they were one and all determined on my banishment.

“One evening, some few weeks after my late mentioned disgrace, Mrs. Woffington was acting Lady Dainty, in the ‘Double Gallant.’ I ventured, after much hesitation, to say to Mrs. Barrington, I thought Mrs. Woffington looked beautiful; Mrs. Barrington tossed up her head and said, ‘That was no news, as she looked so every night;’ at which she and Mrs. Vincent laughed. This occasioned Mrs. Woffington to turn her head and condescendingly ask what they were smiling at? Mrs. Barrington replied that the young man was saying that Lady Dainty looked beautiful that night; and added, she had told him there needed not that information, as she always looked so. Mrs. Wof-

ington, viewing me disdainfully, cried, 'Poor creature!' 'O God!' says I, 'what shall I do for bread?'"

In the year 1750, when Mr. Sheridan was managing at Dublin, he rather reluctantly engaged her. Old Cibber had been writing over her praises, but this was attributed to his partiality. She had, indeed, vastly improved, and devoted herself to cultivating her style. She had visited Paris, and made the acquaintance of Dumesnil and other tragic actresses. In characters of easy, highbred deportment, such as Millimant, Lady Townly, Lady Betty Modish, etc., "she possessed a first-rate merit." She likewise excelled in many of the humorous parts of comedy, such as Lady Pliant, in Congreve's "Double Dealer," and Mrs. Day, in "The Committee." This laudable ambition was to her credit.

When she was at Paris, some English who were at the theatre one night noticed that she was attended by old Owen M'Swiney, her ex-manager; and this acquaintance was to bring her unexpected profit. But a more curious incident occurred. Angelo, the well-known fencing-master, and a handsome man, was about to give a display of his skill before a distinguished company. His son relates what occurred: "There was to be a public fencing-match at a celebrated hotel in Paris, at which were present many of the most renowned professors and amateurs

of that science, most of whom entered the lists. My father, who was honoured with the particular esteem of the Duke de Nivernois, was persuaded by that nobleman to try his skill. No sooner was his name announced, than a celebrated English beauty, Miss Margaret Woffington, the renowned actress, then on a visit to this gay city, who, having met my father at a party, became suddenly captivated by his person and superior address, and following him hither, in presence of a crowd of spectators, stepped forward and presented him with a small bouquet of roses. The company, as well ladies as gentlemen of rank, surprised at this, were no less struck by the gallant manner with which he received the gift. He placed it on his left breast, and addressing the other knights of the sword, exclaimed: 'This will I protect against all opposers.' The match commenced, and he fenced with several of the first masters, not one of whom could disturb a single leaf of the bouquet.

"One evening at Drury Lane theatre, my father being in a private box with Woffington, she gave him her opera-glass, saying: 'Do look across at that young lady,' pointing to a particular box in the opposite circle beneath; on his doing as she desired, she added, 'Well, is she not beautiful as an angel?' My father fortunately discovered who this young lady was, got introduced to her mother,

and obtaining her consent, wooed that daughter who became my mother. They lived together in conjugal happiness, until my father's death, which happened not until he had entered his eighty-seventh year."

*

Repairing to Dublin, she was engaged for the season for 400*l.*, as I have said, reluctantly enough, and only on pressure of friends. Four of her characters—Lady Townly, Maria (in the "Nonjuror"), Sir Harry, and Hermione—each performed there ten nights, and no less a sum than 4000*l.* was taken, an instance never known in any theatre from old stage plays. The following season she received 800*l.*; and though it was to be supposed that her force to draw audiences must be weakened, yet it was not so much as was expected, and the profits fell short of the first season by only 300*l.*

It was during this success that a curious incident occurred. To the astonishment of the town, the manager and his fair performer set off together for Quilca, a seat of his in the County Cavan, about fifty miles from Dublin. This *tête-à-tête* party (as the manager left his wife behind) must have created merriment in a place where the actions of remarkable persons are presently known, especially of players, who were not notorious for their good conduct. "As I was not in the secret, I wondered at this transaction, and the more, as I knew the manager's

private sentiments of that lady, which tallied with my own, viz., that she had captivating charms, as a jovial, witty, bottle-companion, but very few remaining as a mere female." New stories were propagated every morning about this mysterious couple, and whimsical reports of Mrs. Sheridan's raging fits of jealousy. But Mrs. Sheridan was not only in the secret, but, being a lady of distinguished good sense, was, at all times, fully satisfied with the conduct of her husband.

"And now for the secret, which was very soon (as Scrub says) no secret at all. The manager, to show his extraordinary politeness to Mrs. Woffington, carried her down to Quilca, to meet a worthy clergyman in his neighbourhood, who, from the wildness of his situation, is called the Primate of the Mountains. This reverend gentleman was to receive the recantation of this lady from the Romish religion to the Protestant. I say to receive it, and to perform the ceremony; because a motive more powerful than any arguments that could be used by the whole body of the clergy had already persuaded her to make that necessary change. An estate of 200*l.* a year in Ireland had been lately left her by her old friend and admirer, the famous Owen M'Swiney, Esq.; which she was put in the possession of by virtue of that recantation."

Thus Victor, who was in Dublin at the time.

That the story is true is shown by the fact of her name being in a list of converts, filed at The Tholsel, in January, 1756. It does not redound to the credit of the lively Peg.

There was in Dublin a Beefsteak Club, maintained by the manager, and which included whatever there was of fashion and brilliancy in the town. To this one lady alone was admitted.

"This famous club, in the remarkable year 1753, was metamorphosed by Mrs. Woffington, who was delighted with the novelty of her station, and who had wit and spirit to support it. The table, my reader will suppose, was constantly filled with her friends, who happened to be all courtiers; and as not a glass of wine is drunk in that kingdom without first naming the toast, it is easy to guess the strain of toasts that were constantly given in that club."

The disastrous riots that followed, which ended in the ruin of the manager, are well-known, and obliged her to leave the capital. There was a gallant spirit about her which we must admire; nor was she afraid to confront an angry audience. Thus, says Wilkinson :

"I remember in the winter of 1751, when Barry, the divine Barry! either had, or pretended he had, frequent sore throats and hoarsenesses. The comedies in which Mrs. Woffington was principal, were generally brought forward on these sicknesses of the

tragedians ; and at the bottom of the bill, in which she alone stood capital, were generally announced the united names of Quin, Barry, and Cibber. Of this she constantly complained, and at last declared that the next time it happened she would not play. The next day the 'Constant Couple' was put up—Sir Harry Wildair, Mrs. Woffington—with the great names at the bottom of the bill. Woffington kept her word, sent a message at five o'clock she was ill, and positively refused to play. They were obliged to substitute 'The Miser.' By this time the public began to murmur at their frequent disappointments, and took it into their heads that Mr. Rich, the manager, was very ill-used by his company, and determined on the next *indisposition* they would interfere and resent for him. Precisely at this time Woffington made her refusal, and on her next appearance in 'Lady Jane Grey' the whole weight of their resentment fell on her.

“Whoever is living, and saw her that night, will own they never beheld any figure half so beautiful since ; her anger gave a glow to her complexion, and even added lustre to her charming eyes. They treated her very rudely, bade her ask pardon, and threw orange-peel. She behaved with great resolution, and treated their rudeness with glorious contempt ; she left the stage, was called for, and with infinite persuasion was prevailed on to return. However, she did, walked forward, and told them she

was there ready and willing to perform her character if they chose to permit her; that the decision was *theirs, on or off*, just as they pleased, a matter of indifference to her. The *ons* had it, and all went smoothly afterwards, though she always persisted in believing that the party was originally formed by Mr. Rich's family and particular friends."

That she was rather a coarse, rough, but good-natured creature there can be little doubt. In the plays and shows she always figures as something sentimental and interesting.

Some five or six years later this brilliant career was to come to a close in a truly tragic fashion. Wilkinson gives the scene, not without dramatic effect :

"On Monday night, May 17th, 1757, I was standing near the wing," he says, "as Mrs. Woffington in *Rosalind*, and Mrs. Vincent in *Celia*, were going on the stage in the first act. Mrs. Woffington ironically said she was glad to have that opportunity of congratulating me on my stage success, and did not doubt but such merit would ensure me an engagement the following winter. I bowed, but made her no answer. I needed not any flight to sink me lower. She went through *Rosalind* for four acts without my perceiving she was in the least disordered, but in the fifth she complained of great indisposition. I offered her my arm, the which she graciously accepted; I

thought she looked softened in her behaviour, and had less of the *hauteur*. When she came off at the quick change of dress she again complained of being ill ; but got accoutered and returned to finish the part, and pronounced in the epilogue speech : ‘ If it be true that good wine needs no bush, it is as true that a good play needs no epilogue,’ etc. etc. But when arrived at ‘ If I were among you I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me,’ her voice broke, she faltered, endeavoured to go on, but could not proceed ; then in a voice of tremor screamed : ‘ O God ! O God ! ’ tottered to the stage-door speechless, where she was caught. The audience of course applauded till she was out of sight, and then sunk into awful looks of astonishment, both young and old, before and behind the curtain, to see one of the most handsome women of the age, a favourite principal actress, and who had for several seasons given high entertainment, struck so suddenly by the hand of death in such a situation of time and place, and in her prime of life, being then about forty-four. She was given over that night, and for several days ; but so far recovered as to linger till near the year 1760, but existed as a mere skeleton, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything. Vain is beauty’s gaudy flower !

“ She died in rich circumstances. Colonel Cæsar, of the Guards, was by agreement to have received all

her possessions, it having been settled between the colonel and Mrs. Woffington that which of the two was the survivor should inherit all that the other possessed, and this was signed by a will by each party. But the generous colonel was deceived; for she secretly made an after will, while her colonel was engaged out at a dinner, and left every article whatever to her sister Mrs. Cholmondeley."

It is difficult, however, to arrive at the truth in this; the remarkable picture of her in the National Portrait Gallery, representing her in the depths of illness and decay, shows a face full of the old charms and attractions.

She lingered on for three years, then died. Close to the pulpit in Teddington Church, on the north-eastern wall, is placed a tablet: "Near this monument lies the body of Margaret Woffington, spinster, born October 18th, 1720, who departed this life March 28th, 1760, aged forty years. In the same grave lies the body of Master Horace Cholmondeley, son of the Hon. Robert Cholmondeley, and Mary Cholmondeley, sister of the said Margaret Woffington, aged 6 months."

It has often been supposed that the Teddington almshouses were endowed by her, but the late Mr. Cole ascertained that they had been founded a hundred years before.

"Her fortune was said to be about 5000*l*. Some

generalship was practised between Mrs. Woffington and Colonel Cæsar. The former having neglected to make the clause in favour of her sister till this, her last illness, the colonel suspected her intentions; and, with a view to prevent them, was constant in his daily visits, almost from morning till night. The sister took advantage, however, of the colonel's leaving the house one evening rather early, and had the will *altered to her mind*.

"We had the above anecdote," says Mr. Cooke, "from a gentleman now living, who was then clerk to an eminent attorney, under whom he was employed to draw the will. Mr. Hoole" (the ingenious translator of "Ariosto," etc.), "who knew her perfectly well, has drawn her public and private character faithfully :

Blest in each art, by Nature form'd to please,
With beauty, sense, with elegance and ease,
Whose piercing genius studied all mankind,
All Shakespeare opening to thy vigorous mind ;
In every scene of comic humour known,
In sprightly sallies, wit was all thy own :
Whether you seem'd the Cit's more humble wife,
Or shone in Townly's higher sphere of life,
Alike thy spirit knew each turn of wit,
And gave new force to all the poet writ."

Her sister, Miss Mary Woffington, she had sent abroad, to be admitted into a convent. She eventually was married to a clergyman, a brother of Lord Cholmondeley. That nobleman was much offended

at what he considered a degrading union in the family ; but, on being introduced to Mrs. Woffington, some months after the match, he was so much pleased with her that he declared, though he had been at first offended at the match, he was then reconciled to it. Mrs. Woffington, who had educated and supported her sister, coldly answered : " My lord, I have much more reason to be offended at it than your lordship ; for I had before but one beggar to maintain, and now I have two."

" I was once," says Mr. Taylor, who relates this anecdote, " in company with her sister, Mrs. Cholmondeley, who seemed to think herself a wit, endeavoured to monopolise the conversation, and evidently betrayed the vulgarity of her origin."*

Of this lively lady, an amusing sketch is given by Miss Burney, which exhibits her as a frivolous, chattering person, quite overpowering in her high spirits :

Mr. Cholmondeley is a clergyman, nothing shining either in person or manners, but rather grim in the first, and glum in the last. Yet he appears to have humour himself, and to enjoy it much in others. Miss Fanny Cholmondeley, his daughter, is a rather

* The heralds, in some publications, have set the two sisters down as daughters of " — Woffington, Esquire."

pretty, pale girl; very young and inartificial; and, though tall and grown up, treated by her family as a child, and seemingly well content to really think herself such. She followed me, whichever way I turned; and, though she was too modest to stare, never ceased watching me the whole evening.

Well, while this was going forward, a violent rapping bespoke, I was sure, Mrs. Cholmondeley, and I ran from the standers, and, turning my back against the door, looked over Miss Palmer's cards; for you may well imagine I was really in a tremor at a meeting which so long has been in agitation, and with the person who, of all persons, has been most warm and enthusiastic for my book.

She had not, however, been in the room half an instant ere my father came up to me, and, tapping me on the shoulder, said: "Fanny, here's a lady who wishes to speak to you."

I curtseyed in silence; she, too, curtseyed, and fixed her eyes full on my face, and then, tapping me with her fan, she cried: "Come, come; you must not look grave upon me."

Upon this, I te-he'd; she now looked at me yet more earnestly, and, after an odd silence, said abruptly: "But is it true?"

"What, ma'am?"

"It can't be!—tell me, though, is it true?"

I could only simper.

"Why don't you tell me?—but it can't be—I don't believe it!—no, you are an impostor!"

Sir Joshua and Lord Palmerston were both at her side; oh, how notably silly must I look! She again repeated her question of "Is it true?" and I again affected not to understand her; and then Sir Joshua, taking hold of her arm, attempted to pull her away, saying: "Come, come, Mrs. Cholmondeley, I won't have her overpowered here!"

I love Sir Joshua much for this. But Mrs. Cholmondeley, turning to him, said, with quickness and vehemence: "Why, I ain't going to kill her! don't be afraid, I shan't compliment her!—I can't, indeed!"

Then, taking my hand, she led me through them all, to another part of the room, where again she examined my phiz, and viewed and reviewed my whole person.

"Now," said she, "do tell me; is it true?"

"What, ma'am? — I don't — I don't know what——"

"Pho! what—why you know what; in short, can you read? and can you write?"

"N—o, ma'am!"

"I thought so," cried she; "I have suspected it was a trick, some time, and now I am sure of it. You are too young by half!—it can't be!"

I laughed, and would have got away, but she would not let me.

"No," cried she, "one thing you must, at least, tell me;—are you very conceited? Come, answer me," continued she. "You won't? Mrs. Burney, Dr. Burney—come here—tell me if she is not very conceited?—if she is not eaten up with conceit by this time?"

They were both pleased to answer "Not half enough."

"Well," exclaimed she, "that is the most wonderful part of all! Why that is yet more extraordinary than writing the book!"

I then got away from her, and again looked over Miss Palmer's cards; but she was after me in a minute.

"Pray, Miss Burney," cried she aloud, "do you know anything of this game?"

"No, ma'am."

"No?" repeated she; "*ma foi!* that's a pity."

This raised such a laugh, I was forced to move on; yet everybody seemed to be afraid to laugh too, and studying to be delicate, as if they had been cautioned; which I have since found was really the case, and by Sir Joshua himself.

Again, however, she was at my side.

"What game do you like, Miss Burney?" cried she.

"I play at none, ma'am."

"No? *Pardie!* I wonder at that."

Did you ever know such a toad ? Again I moved on, and got behind Mr. W. Burke, who, turning round to me, said :

“This is not very politic in .us, Miss Burney, to play at cards, and have you listen to our follies.”

Mrs. Cholmondeley hunted me quite round the card-table, from chair to chair, repeating various speeches of Madame Duval ; and when, at last, I got behind a sofa, out of her reach, she called out aloud, “Polly, Polly ! only think, miss has danced with a lord !”

Some time after, contriving to again get near me, she began flirting her fan, and exclaiming, “Well, miss, I have had a beau, I assure you ! ay, and a very pretty beau too, though I don’t know if his lodgings were so prettily furnished, and everything, as Mr. Smith’s.”

Then, applying to Mr. Cholmondeley, she said, “Pray, sir, what is become of my lottery-ticket ?”

“I don’t know,” answered he.

“*Pardie !*” cried she, “you don’t know nothing !”

I had now again made off, and, after much rambling, I at last seated myself near the card-table ; but Mrs. Cholmondeley was after me in a minute, and drew a chair next mine. I now found it impossible to escape, and therefore forced myself to sit still. Lord Palmerston and Sir Joshua, in a few moments, seated themselves by us.

I must now write dialogue-fashion, to avoid the enormous length of Mrs. C.'s name.

Mrs. Chol. I have been very ill ; monstrous ill indeed ! or else I should have been at your house long ago. Sir Joshua, pray how do you do ? You know, I suppose, that I don't come to see you ?

Sir Joshua could only laugh ; though this was her first address to him.

Mrs. Chol. Pray, miss, what's your name ?

F. B. Frances, ma'am.

Mrs. Chol. Fanny ? Well, all the Fannies are excellent ! and yet—my name is Mary ! Pray, Miss Palmer, how are you ?—though I hardly know if I shall speak to you to-night. I thought I should never have got here. I have been so out of humour with the people for keeping me. If you but knew, cried I, to whom I am going to-night, and whom I shall see to-night, you would not dare keep me muzzing here !

During all these pointed speeches, her penetrating eyes were fixed upon me ; and what could I do ?—what, indeed, could anybody do, but colour and simper ?—all the company watching us, though all, very delicately, avoided joining the confab.

In this comical, queer, flighty, whimsical manner she ran on, till we were summoned to supper ; for we were not allowed to break up before ; and then, when Sir Joshua and almost everybody was gone down-

stairs, she changed her tone, and, with a face and voice both grave, said :

“ Well, Miss Burney, you must give me leave to say one thing to you ; yet, perhaps you won’t, neither, will you ? ”

“ What is it, ma’am ? ”

“ Why it is, that I admire you more than any human being ! and that I can’t help ! ”

Then, suddenly rising, she hurried downstairs.

Sir Joshua made me sit next him at supper ; I was glad I was not next Mrs. Cholmondeley ; but she frequently, and very provokingly, addressed herself to me ; once she called out aloud, “ Pray, Miss Burney, is there anything new coming out ? ” And another time, “ Well, I wish people who *can* entertain me *would* entertain me ! ”

These sort of pointed speeches are almost worse than direct attacks ; for there is no knowing how to look, or what to say, especially where the eyes of a whole company mark the object for whom they are meant.

To the last of these speeches I made no sort of answer ; but Sir Joshua very good-naturedly turned it from me, by saying :

“ Well, let everyone do what they can in their different ways ; do you begin yourself.”

“ Oh, I can’t ! ” cried she ; “ I have tried, but I can’t.”

"Do you think, then," answered he, "that all the world is made only to entertain you?"

A very lively dialogue ensued.

When we broke up to depart, which was not till near two in the morning, Mrs. Cholmondeley went up to my mother, and begged her permission to visit in St. Martin's Street. Then, as she left the room, she said to me, with a droll sort of threatening look :

"You have not got rid of me yet; I have been forcing myself into your house."

The children of Mrs. Cholmondeley all married into good families. Of the three daughters, Mary Henrietta was accidentally killed in 1806 by the overturning of a carriage, while in attendance on the Princess of Wales; while Hester Frances married, in 1783, Sir William Bellingham, Bart., and died his widow 10th January, 1844.

At Dunany, in South Ireland, the seat of Sir Alan Bellingham, the present baronet, are preserved several good portraits of the famous Margaret Woffington.

GEORGE BRUMMEL.

ONE of the most melancholy pictures of an adventurer's rise and fall is offered in the career of George Brummel, "the dandy." That profession of a fribble, in which he won his honours, he set off with much selfishness, social cruelty, and that spoliation of tradesmen known to his set as getting into debt. A career of this kind falls within the description of adventure.

Brummel was the grandson of a pastrycook, who had a shop in Bury Street, St. James's, and, like so many in the district at present, added to his means by letting "apartments" to gentlemen of fashion. One of these was Mr. Jenkinson, afterward Lord Liverpool, who got the pastrycook's son a clerkship in one of the public offices, and finally made him his private secretary. George Brummel, the future "dandy," was born in June, 1778. He was sent to

Eton. At school he distinguished himself in all the manly exercises, and as the best scholar—so another dandy, Mr. Raikes, tells us—the best boatman and the best cricketer; and more than all, he was supposed to possess the comprehensive excellences that are represented by the familiar term of “good fellow.” He made many friends amongst the scions of good families, by whom he was considered a sort of Crichton; and his reputation reached a circle over which reigned the celebrated Duchess of Devonshire. “At a grand ball given by her grace, George Brummel, then quite a youth, appeared for the first time in such elevated society. He immediately became a great favourite with the ladies, and was asked by all the dowagers to as many balls and *soirées* as he could attend. At last the Prince of Wales sent for Brummel, and was so much pleased with his manner and appearance, that he gave him a commission in his own regiment, the 10th Hussars. Unluckily Brummel, soon after joining his regiment, was thrown from his horse at a grand review at Brighton, when he broke his classical Roman nose. This misfortune, however, did not affect the fame of the beau; and although his organ had undergone a slight transformation, it was forgiven by his admirers, since the rest of his person remained intact. Brummel continued to govern society, in conjunction with the Prince of Wales. He was remarkable for his dress,

which was generally conceived by himself; the execution of his sublime imagination being carried out by that superior genius, Mr. Weston, tailor, of Old Bond Street. The Regent sympathised deeply with Brummel's labours to arrive at the most attractive and gentlemanly mode of dressing the male form. The hours of meditative agony which each dedicated to the odious fashions of the day have left no monument save the coloured caricature in which these illustrious persons have appeared.

"Brummel, at this time, was very intimate with the Dukes of Rutland, Dorset, and Argyll, Lords Sefton, Alvanley, and Plymouth. In the zenith of his popularity he might be seen at the bay window of White's Club, surrounded by the lions of the day, laying down the law, and occasionally indulging in those witty remarks for which he was famous. His house in Chapel Street corresponded with his personal 'get-up;' the furniture was in excellent taste, and the library contained the best works of the best authors of every period and of every country. His canes, his snuff-boxes, his Sèvres china, were exquisite; his horses and carriage were conspicuous for their excellence; and, in fact, the superior taste of a Brummel was discoverable in everything that belonged to him.

"He did not distinguish himself by any attention

to his military duties, but he may have contributed to the well-known fashionable corps that tone of fashionable insolence which gave it celebrity. The story of 'the 10th don't dance,' is familiar enough; yet we have a curious illustration of the remark that the boys and dandies fought as well, if not better, than the rest; for the officers of this corps, when on the campaign, almost mutinied against their colonel because he was not sufficiently forward in leading them on to battle, and were in consequence taken from the regiment and put into other corps. One of Brummel's most insolent speeches is recorded about this time. When still a hussar, he condescended to go to a ball in Russell Square. Meeting an acquaintance, he exclaimed: 'You here? Do, my good fellow, tell me who that ugly man is leaning against the chimney-piece.' 'Why, surely you must know him,' replied the other, 'tis the master of the house.' 'No, indeed,' said the other coolly; 'how should I? I never was invited.'"

This was the tone maintained by our dandy all through his life, and it was based on the principle that there was always sufficient servility to be found in society to give place and even respect to an overbearing manner and ungracious demeanour, and that such would secure greater advantages than good-breeding or good-nature.

It must be confessed, however, that there is an

original flavour in his insolence, and that the specimens recorded are redeemed by something that is quaintly amusing, if not lively. As, when dining at a house in Hampshire, where the champagne was inferior, he waited for a pause in the conversation, and then said aloud, "John, give me some more of that *cider*." On being asked where he had dined yesterday, he answered that it was with "a person of the name of R——s. To give him his due, he begged me to make up the party myself, so I asked Alvanley, Mills, Pierrepont, and a few others; and I assure you the affair was quite unique. There was every delicacy; the Sillery was perfect; but, my dear fellow, conceive my astonishment when I tell you that *Mr. R——s had the assurance to sit down and dine with us.*" A visitor having bored him with praises of what he had seen in his travels, the lakes, etc., the Beau turned to his valet, and asked, "Which of the lakes is it that I admire?" "Windermere, I believe, sir." "Ah! so it is—Windermere, yes." Good, too, is his well-known, original explanation of his having caught a cold—the landlord having put him in a room "with a damp stranger." Once, probably by a mistake that was wilful, the Beau put up at a house to which he had not been invited; he was told of his error and received a hint to depart. He revenged himself by giving out afterwards that "it was a very good house to *stop one night in.*"

His practical jokes too, of which he was fond, were of a racy, if not of an unfeeling, kind. It is difficult to resist a smile at one of which a French *émigré* marquis was the subject or victim. On a sultry morning, at a country house, he had secretly contrived to mix sugar with the powder the poor marquis used for his wig. The scene was at Woburn Abbey, or some "great house," and at breakfast. As soon as the marquis sat down all the flies began to settle on his head. In vain he attempted to brush them away. As breakfast proceeded their numbers increased : they came in swarms from all parts of the garden ; while the astonishment of the company at their buzzings may be conceived. The sugar now melting, began to trickle down his face, on which the flies also settled, and the poor Frenchman had at last to fly from the room amid roars of laughter. So with his reply to the beggar who petitioned him for alms, even if it was only a halfpenny : " Poor fellow ! " said the Beau, in a tone of good-nature, " I have heard of such a coin, but I never possessed one ; there's a shilling for you ! " To which may be added his remark on one of the essentials of life, viz. having " country washing."

Yet there must have been something redeeming in the man ; for he certainly made friends, and his brother dandies stood by him in his adversity. Mr. Raikes notes how he was literally the idol of the

ladies. "Poor Brummel! What a fate was his! He was in his time the very glass of fashion; everyone, from the highest to the lowest, conspired to spoil him; and who that knew him well could deny that, with all his faults, he was still the most gentlemanlike, the most agreeable of companions? Never was there a man who, during his career, had such unbounded influence, and, what is seldom the case, such general popularity in society. Without being a man of intrigue he was the idol of the women; happy was she in whose opera-box he would pass an hour, at whose table he would dine, or whose assembly he would honour!—and why? Not only because he was a host of amusement in himself, with his jokes and his jeers, but because he was such a favourite with the men, that all were anxious then to join the party."

This sagacious observer has hardly had sufficient credit for his profound knowledge of society, and for his acute remarks, which would be of service to anyone wishing to make society a profession. What a good distinction, for instance, is here!—"In French society the women give the *ton*, assert their influence, and, by their verdict alone, determine the weight which each man shall have in the circle; the men only live under the sanction of their approbation, and the idol of to-day may be the object of *persiflage* to-morrow. From their judgment there is no appeal. Whether it may be that the numerous clubs in

London render the men independent of women's society, or whether the absence of these unremitting attentions on their part, which characterise what is called good-breeding in France, renders the English women most anxious to engross the admiration of the men, the thing itself is certain, that not only do they make greater advances to attract attentions, but even in their predilections for certain individuals they are much more influenced by the opinions of the men than by their own. I have generally observed that, with a few exceptions, the greatest favourites with the women have been those who were most popular among men."

The violent intimacy with the Prince of Wales ended in a rupture. There have been many accounts of this quarrel, and the cause of it, "George, ring the bell," etc. It is exceedingly improbable that Brummel would have shown such a want of *savoir-faire*, or, if the incident occurred, it must have been the last stage in an existing quarrel. Mr. Raikes says that Brummel always denied having used the words, "George, ring the bell;" but seems to admit that he used some freedoms of speech. It has been said that Brummel espoused the cause of Mrs. Fitzherbert; but this again is unlikely, or, if he did, it would probably have been *in consequence* of the previous quarrel. The breach may reasonably be set down to what so often arises between persons

of such different character and rank, viz., jealousy, or a growing distaste. The prince rapidly tired of his favourite, and Brummel may have been sagacious enough to anticipate his noble patron. The scene at the ball, with the remark, "Who is your fat friend?" no doubt actually occurred, and has been described by the witnesses.

"Deserted by the Prince of Wales," goes on his friend Raikes, "but courted by all the high society of London, he found a new friend and patron in the Duke of York, who was never known, in good or ill report, to desert a friend. The duchess was very partial to Brummel: and as she had great *finesse*, excellent taste, and was a very nice discriminator of good-breeding and manners, the approbation of such a woman must be highly creditable to the individual himself. It may indeed be said, in favour of the manners of the day, that I have often heard the duchess remark how superior they were to the tone which existed at the period of her marriage and first arrival in England, when the duke was surrounded by a set of *roués* who seemed to glory in their excesses, and showed a great want of refinement and courtesy in women's society. She particularly mentioned Charles Wyndham, Hervey Aston, and a few more as the objects of her dread and aversion."

It was to her he addressed a pleasant *jeu d'esprit*, which was prompted by her well-known passion for

dogs, whose numerous graves, each marked with a suitable memorial, are still to be seen at Oatlands.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

“The humble petition of Neptune

“SHEWETH,

“That your royal highness’s petitioner, at an age so early that no trace of the circumstance is recorded in his memory, was torn from his fond mother and native mountains of Newfoundland, by an officer of the British Navy, who, during his life was a kind master to him; that, at his ever-to-be-lamented death, your royal highness’s petitioner encountered many hardships of cold, hunger, and neglect; that he was rescued from this unhappy situation by an officer of militia, and by him sent as an offering of friendship to his present protector, who has ever treated him with kindness and humanity! but alas! your royal highness’s humble petitioner is fated again to experience ‘the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,’ unless your royal highness, with that benevolence which marks every action of your life, will stretch out your humane hand to save him. The gentleman with whom he now resides is under the necessity of leaving England, and, finding it inconvenient to make your petitioner the companion of his travels, intends to part with him, when he may

become the slave of some unfeeling master, who may, in addition to the sufferings he has already endured, deprive him of that liberty he loves, the only blessing of which fate has never yet bereft him.

“Humbly then does your royal highness’s petitioner implore your royal highness to take him into your service, and every moment of his life (if permitted), shall be passed at your royal feet, and his faithful mind be filled with fidelity, gratitude, and attachment towards his royal benefactress. On the earth, or in the water, he will be a zealously devoted attendant and humble friend, who will fawn without meaning to flatter, and would endanger his own life to defend that of his generous mistress ; most happy to follow her royal footsteps through the sequestered glades of Oatlands, pursue her carriage, panting with dutiful devotion, or swim round her barge as it glides on the silver Thames.

“Without vanity, your royal highness’s petitioner may boast of being, in strength, beauty, and fidelity, equal to any dog his frozen clime ever produced ; and, happiest of the canine race will he be, if permitted the transcendent felicity of dedicating the remainder of his life to your royal highness’s service. Oh, most amiable duchess, grant this, your petitioner’s humble prayer, and he, with all the fervour his heart and language are capable of, will ever, ever pray !

NEPTUNE.

“P.S.—A line, by command of your royal highness, addressed under cover to Mr. —, — Street, Westminster, if your royal highness deigns to accept his services, will bring your petitioner, with awful respect, to your gate.”

This petition was forwarded to the Duchess of York in September, 1815, and on the back of a copy of it presented by Brummel to a friend of the author's, was the following note :

“The Duchess of York immediately sent for this amiable dog. His previous master would never reveal his name to her royal highness. Five years after, her royal highness, to the deep regret of all the world, died, and this poor animal walked in procession at her funeral. It is no romance, but the dog lingered in evident affliction, and died ten months after. The duchess gave me this petition.

“GEORGE BRUMMEL.”

Everyone knows of his neckcloths, of “our failures,” and his enormous washing-bills. So important was found this matter of the neckcloths, that after the opera, he always went home to put on another, if he were going to a ball. His washing-bill, as may be conceived, was enormous.

Mr. Raikes draws the following highly-finished sketch of him when at the height of his reputation :

“ Brummel was tall, well made, and a very good figure. He became latterly bald, and continued to wear powder to the last of his stay in England ; he rather piqued himself on preserving this remnant of the *vieille cour* amidst the inroads of the crops and roundheads, which dated from the Revolution. He was always studiously and remarkably well-dressed, never *outré* ; and, though considerable time and attention were devoted to his toilet, it never, when once accomplished, seemed to occupy his attention. His manners were easy, polished, and gentlemanlike, stamped with what St. Simon would call ‘ *l’usage du monde, et du plus grand et du meilleur,*’ and regulated by that same good taste which he displayed in most things. No one was a more keen observer of vulgarism in others, or more piquant in his criticisms, or more despotic as an *arbiter elegantiarum* ; he could decide the fate of a young man just launched into the world by a single word. His dress was the general model, and when he had struck out a new idea, he would smile at observing its gradual progress downwards from the highest to the lowest classes. Without many accomplishments, he had a talent for drawing miniatures in water-colours, though I believe that beautiful one of the Prince of Wales (George IV.) in the robes of the Garter, which he

wished to palm upon us as his own production, was in fact executed by Cosway. He was a fair judge of paintings, but particularly of Sèvres china, old lacque, buhl, and all those objects of art which were encouraged by the old French court, and which in those days were much more rare in England than they have since become. He had a fine collection of valuable snuff-boxes; one of which, remarkable for two fine Petitots of Madame de Sévigné and Madame de Grignan, I bought at the sale of his effects at Robins's auction-rooms for 125 guineas. It is only justice to say that he was not only good-natured but thoroughly good-tempered. I never remember to have seen him out of humour. His conversation, without having the wit and humour of Alvanley, was highly amusing and agreeable, replete with anecdotes, not only of the day, but of society several years back, which his early introduction to Carlton House and to many of the Prince's older associates had given him the opportunities of knowing correctly. He had also a peculiar talent for ridicule (not ill-natured), but more properly termed *persiflage*, which, if it enabled him to laugh some people out of bad habits, was, I fear, too often exerted to laugh others out of good principles. He was liberal, friendly, *serviable*, without any shuffling or tortuous policy or meanness, or manœuvring for underhand objects; himself of no rank or family,

but living always with the highest and noblest in the country, on terms of intimacy and familiarity, but without *bassesse* or truckling; on the contrary, courted, applauded, and imitated, protecting rather than protected, and exercising an influence, a fascination in society which no one ever felt a wish to resist. Here we must stop and mark the reverse of the medal—never did any influence create such wide and real mischief in society. Governed by no principle himself, all his efforts and example tended to stifle it in others. Prodigality was his creed, gambling was his lure, and a reckless indifference to public opinion the very groundwork of his system. The cry of indignation that was raised at his departure, when he left so many friends who had become his securities to pay the means of his past extravagance, some of them at the risk of their own ruin, was a low and feeble whisper when compared to the groans and sighs of entire families who have since had to deplore those vices and misfortunes which first originated in his seductions."

As he was both spendthrift and gambler, the money his father left him—said to amount to 30,000*l.*^s—was dissipated in a few years. Yet he carried on the game to the last moment. One night, while really in desperate straits, he was seen at the opera in all his splendour and fashion, and by midnight was in a postchaise and four, hurrying

down to Dover. On the next evening he was pacing that lonely place of banishment—then the debtor's official refuge, protection, and shelter—Calais.

Here he lived for several years, and, instead of yielding to adverse fate, created for himself a new position; was enabled, by his buoyancy of temper and faith in himself, to maintain his air of fashion, even in that state of desolation. His friends the Alvanleys, *e tutti quanti*, who passed between London and Paris, invariably stopped to see him, give him a dinner, and something more substantial still; for this *élégant* had arrived much at the state of feeling of Dickens's Father of the Marshalsea, and found no loss of dignity in being maintained at the charges of others. He felt they were under obligations to him for all he had done for fashion.

But he continued his wasteful extravagance, laying out what he obtained from the generosity of his friends on superfluities, articles of dress, rare china, costly snuff-boxes, washing, etc. Here he displayed his magnificent dressing-service, all of silver. "No gentleman," he said, "could *spit* into anything except silver." There is something ineffably *mean* in the display of pride under such conditions; and he affected, even in the bankrupt society of Calais, an assertion of *caste*. Selections from his letters to his old friends reflected the same reckless tone:

“I heard of you the other day in a waistcoat that does you indisputable credit, spick and span from Paris, a broad stripe, salmon colour, and *cramoisi*. Keep it up, my dear fellow, and don't let them laugh you into a relapse so Gothic as that of your former English simplicity. There is nothing to be seen here but rascals in red coats waiting for embarkation. God speed them to the other side the water, for on this they are most heartily loathed. No news of interest to you, excepting indeed what may incense you against Russian indifference to etiquette when betrayed at the expense of one of your favourites. At the great dinner given by Wellington at Valenciennes to the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, my Lady —, from her rank, was first turn for the autocrat's hand ; and, when dinner was announced, the said lady stepped forward, in the confidence of being led in first ; but Alexander bowed, passed her, and took Lady William Russell (Bessy Rawdon), who was standing next to her, which was remarked by the whole room.”

It must be said that his letters, like those of most of the dandies of his time, were full of a certain spirit and cleverness. Witness the following :

“Berkeley Craven, in passing through this place, has just told me that it is your intention to go to

Paris before next month. I will therefore take the liberty to request, if such is your determination, that you will order your *Frontin* to put up an extra 2 lb. of the *Façon de Paris* you had the kindness to leave with me on your last return to England. It was the best snuff with which my nose was ever nourished, and my brain has been in a state of inanity ever since it was exhausted. I have not either a pinch of any decent tobacco remaining to befriend my sluggish evenings. Do this for me, and accept an infinity of thanks.

“Point de nouvelles ici. Je vis à l'ordinaire dans une grande retraite. Je partage mon temps entre la lecture, la peinture, et la promenade, et j'éprouve que le charme consolateur de l'étude et des beaux-arts peut, sinon guérir les blessures du passé, du moins en adoucir l'amertume. Se livrer à des occupations continuelles, c'est lutter avec courage contre la douleur et l'ennui ; et qui les combat avec persévérance finit par en triompher.—Adieu, mon brave. Toujours à toi,

G. BRUMMEL.”

Again, in 1817 :

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“As my personal communication at this place is confined to M. Quillac, his waiter, to a *domestique* upon trial (who I firmly believe to be le Duc de

Castries in disguise), and to an old abbé, who daily instructs me in the French dialect, at three francs an hour, you must allow me, with all that kindness you have of late so ostensibly shown me, to talk to you a little in correspondence. I was persuaded you had no hand in the mutilation of the muslin that was sent to me. No, I said, he never in cold blood could have been guilty of this outrage. The fault then rests with that Vandal Chapman, who, in the attempt to exculpate himself, has added a lie to the previous offence; for, according to all the rules of geometry, two triangles will form a square, to the end of the world; and of equal triangular proportions are the kerchiefs in question.

“The intention you profess of sending me some square pieces, assures me you are in such good humour, that I shall ask you to add to my obligations by letting me have them immediately, with the snuff, and do not wait for Alvanley’s packet (books of which he advised me, and which I have been all impatience to receive); but the circumstance has perhaps already escaped his memory; and, while he is in a state of suspense about his own personal concerns, I cannot in reason expect he should think of such trifles. Have you received my last letter? I write you as much extempore nonsense as my head and circumstances can furnish. It is better than boring you with more serious themes. However consonant they may be to

my present thoughts, I am sure you must prefer even the semblance of my being in more cheerful mood than when we last shook hands.

“If you should have a rainy morning, and ten minutes’ leisure, do not, I beseech you, forget such an exiled, disconsolate devil as—yours most truly,

“G. BRUMMEL.”

A painfully significant illustration of the falsity and hollowness of convivial friendship, was the episode of George IV.’s passage through Calais. The broken-down beau had a faint hope that his old friend would be generous and send for him, but his Majesty quitted the town without seeing him. The contrast was truly sad. The little town, *en fête*, the flags, the welcome; while the fallen dandy, who could not obtrude himself, was vainly hoping against hope that there would be a reconciliation, and possibly a rescue from his difficulties. But he heard nothing, and the King went his way without a meeting. Something of his behaviour must be set to the account of that shrinking from a long and troublesome explanation, and from having to meet requests which would have to be denied, and the general “disagreeable bother” which often attends meetings with the unfortunate. It has been said that Brummel disdained to make an advance, and his Majesty expected such; but this is very unlikely. Brummel, it seems,

wrote his name down at Dessein's ; and there is a story of a claim for a costly snuff-box, which the King had once taken from him, with a promise to give him another instead ; and, on this reminder being now made, his Majesty said contemptuously, "I suppose the poor devil wants cash," and ordered a hundred guineas to be sent him.

In 1829, Major Chambers, when going abroad, brought letters to Mr. Brummel, then at Calais, and waited on him at his lodgings leading out of the Grande Place to Dessein's Hotel. He found him, as all found him, very agreeable and chatty, and arrayed in a dressing-gown and gorgeous gold-laced cap. He seems to have been hospitable, and asked his new acquaintance to dine very often, when he retailed for him his old recollections. Most curious was his account of this arrival of George IV. at Calais, and of his own behaviour on this occasion. "The cavalcade," he said, "had turned into the street leading out of the Grande Place, and he was bowing to the people right and left, when his eye suddenly caught that of Brummel standing on the steps of a shoemaker's shop ; and his astonishment was so great that, throwing up his hands, he exclaimed, 'D——n it, there's old Brummel.'" Brummel, when he got home—this is still his own story—prepared a box of favourite snuff, which, with a bottle of brandy thirty years old, he sent to his Majesty. No notice

appears to have been taken of this beyond the substantial recognition of the hundred guineas, which, however, Brummel makes no mention of. His Majesty won golden opinions from the French. He spoke to the old soldiers, invited the commandants to dine, dismissed his own barge and took a French pilot-boat, attended the theatre and sent the performers handsome presents; but it would have been far more royal had he sent for the wretched, broken-down exile—his old companion—who was within a few doors of him.

His new friend described him as being particularly fond of reading French memoirs. Every Monday he prepared his snuff for the week, with green tea, his valet attending. At four in the afternoon he appeared on the Place "in form," dressed and attended by his dog. The story of the sixpence which he had the misfortune to lose was quite true, and he related it to his visitor. One morning, he was going home after a night at White's Club, when he saw something shining on the pavement of Hill Street. This was the lucky sixpence; and he declared that with it in his pocket, he won 36,000*l.* in London, and 8000*l.* at Newmarket. Once, however, taking out his golden snuff-box he dropped the sixpence; from that day, he protested, his luck left him. Everyone has noticed the cows which stand in the Park, and Mr. Brummel claimed to have introduced them. He

once gave it out that curds and whey were excellent at breakfast, and made them the rage, to the benefit of the park-keepers. He told his friend pleasantly of his mode of dealing with his Calais creditors was: "The moment he enters the room," he said, "I begin an amusing conversation, and tell him stories that will interest him. This diverts him and his attention, and he goes away. But my stock is completely exhausted; I have nothing now to tell them, and what to do I know not." The gentleman suggested the sale of his articles of *virtù*, snuff-boxes, and buhl furniture. The idea was acted upon, and brought in a substantial sum.

Brummel was all this time wearying out his friends at home with applications for a place of consul, and at last the Duke of Wellington was induced to give him the vice-consulship at Caen. The difficulty was now to get away from Calais, where he was deep in debt. He owed about 1000*l.* to his landlord and tradesmen. By a desperate arrangement money was raised on his future salary of 400*l.* a year, which left him but 80*l.* a year to live on. The reckless creature set off in triumph for Paris, where he was fêted by his jovial friends, and ordered a new snuff-box for 80*l.* ! He entered Caen in a carriage-and-four, with his servant in the rumble.

Here, being an official, he was enabled to recommence his old career of extravagance. In a few

months he was deeply in debt—his washing-bill was 40*l*. He had found an English agent, who made him advances, but he was already in a helpless state, begging for a few hundred francs “before four o’clock.” Yet in this extremity he maintained his old dandyism, taking hours over his toilet, having his boots “blackened all over,” including the soles, with other extravagances.

At last, to the astonishment of all his friends, he suddenly resigned his post. No one seemed able to offer any explanation for this act. Yet it is really intelligible. It will be recollected that he had mortgaged his salary so deeply that the remnant was only a trifle. This now must have been pledged for subsequent debts ; so it is to be feared that this specimen of dandyism did not feel himself bound to retain what could only be of service to his creditors. It must be seen that he had suggested the abolishing the office from there being “nothing to do,” with a view of being rewarded with another post ; but the defrauding of his creditors remains.

Lord Palmerston used to ask what he could do, as Brummel had really suggested the abolition of the office. On the day when the news got abroad that he was no longer consul, his debtors rushed to his house and were confounded to find that the English flag was struck. Instantly they all closed in upon him. The following shows the desperation of his position :

“Dear Armstrong,” he writes to his banker, “send me seventy-five francs to pay my washerwoman; I cannot get a shirt from her, and she is really starving on my account. I have not actually money to pay my physician, or for my letters to and from England.—Yours, G. B.”

The only course now was to despatch this Armstrong to England on a begging expedition to his old particular friends, who generously made a substantial collection, each putting down sums like 50*l.* and more, and it was indeed undertaken that 150*l.* a year should be regularly sent to him. It was hopeless, however, to think of doing anything for such a man. The Calais creditor, Leveux, finding himself thus “jockeyed,” as it were, took a serious step to revenge himself. In 1835 gendarmes surrounded his lodgings, and the once famous dandy was dragged off to the common jail! Here the fastidious Brummel had to suffer tortures from being shut up in a single room with common prisoners, and their truckle beds, a stone floor, and no chairs.

He wrote in prison, May 5th, 1835: “I still breathe, though I am not of the living—the state of utter abstraction in which I have been during the last thirty hours yet clouds my every sense. I have just received your note. May Heaven bless you all for your good devotedness in remembering me at such a moment!”

By the interest of French friends, he was allowed to sleep "in a passage," and received many other indulgences. His old training in the science of fashionable restraint enabled him to cast an air of gay indifference over his trials, and we soon find him holding "levées" of his friends, and writing pleasant letters in acknowledgment of books and delicacies. It is extraordinary to find this strange being devoting hours every day to his dress in the mean surroundings of his prison, nervously anxious to receive various toilet necessities—*esprit de savon*, etc. Every day a large quantity of water was carried in, with which was mixed two quarts of milk for his bath! While he was equally fastidious as to his meals, for which he was literally dependent on charity or good-nature. Yet this miserable being thus contemptuously described this fare :

"One solitary chop, about the size of an *écu*, enveloped in a quire of greasy paper, and the skeleton of a pigeon, a bird I could never fancy. I must not omit to mention the accompaniment of *half* a dozen potatoes. Such was my meal of yesterday evening, after a fast of twelve hours. It is not, I am certain, the fault of the son, but the *ladrerie* of the *père et mère*, with which I have been so long acquainted. If they transmit me nothing more solid and bountiful this evening, I shall be reduced to borrow a *tranche* of the *bouilli* from which the *soupe maigre* of my neigh-

bours the brigands is extracted. I have not seen a soul to-day. I have no news, and I am in the very slough of despondency."

To a lady he wrote: "P.S.—You will perceive the extremities to which I am reduced—I *am about to seal to you with a wafer! Do not even whisper this indecorum, for perhaps I may again frequent the world.*"

The good-nature of his friends, almost exclusively French, was untiring. They sent him presents of all kinds; but he was most grateful to a young Frenchman who presented him with a looking-glass. It is but fair to say that much of his carelessness was assumed; and he is described as giving way, in private, to tears, and the most overwhelming dejection. The most delicate and welcome of the attentions he received was a dinner "offered" to him in jail, by Baron de Bresmenil, a nobleman of his acquaintance, *en partie fine*, with all the rare wines and dishes, which he was invited to order himself. "On this occasion, he rose above his misfortunes, and great was his good-humour; he related much; he related well. Anecdote after anecdote of his early life followed in quick succession; and, while wrapped in all the imperturbable *sérieux* of a good narrator, he threw his companions into fits of laughter. But, as in a palace, so in a prison, there is no happiness without alloy. The dinner over, coffee was brought

in, and Monsieur le Comte de Roncherolles, a very kind friend of Brummel's, announced for the *chasse* a bottle of his old *eau-de-vie d'Andaye*, which his celebrated acquaintance had many times, and under more agreeable circumstances, acknowledged to be perfect. Brummel was in raptures. "Fetch the bottle," he cried to one of the three young thieves who waited; "fetch the bottle, my dear de Roncherolles; no cognac that I ever tasted can be compared to yours of Andaye."

"One of the petty larcenists immediately left the room for the brandy, but did not return; another was sent to hasten him, and the third, but neither they nor the brandy made its appearance. The revellers at length became impatient at the delay, and shouted for their attendants, who arrived with the pleasing intelligence that the brandy of Monsieur le Comte had disappeared! At this juncture, and in the midst of the fray, Brummel, disappointed and trembling with passion, rose hastily from his chair, and, spreading out his arms towards the supposed delinquents, with the gesture of a person who commands, and yet entreats, shrieked out: '*Malheureux! avez-vous à vous plaindre? On ne vous a que trop bien traité. Scélérats, rendez-moi mon pousse café!*'"

This energetic and pathetic address actually drew tears from his own eyes, and a chorus of execrations from the guests; the more so as one of the party,

who returned at the moment from making a search, informed them of what the attendants feared to relate—that the turnkey, honest Brillant, to whose especial care the cognac had been confided, had drained it to the last drop, and was lying insensible and snoring.

“At the same table were assembled a famous courtier, once the companion of a king; a count; a baron; a newspaper editor; and an old butler, for Monsieur Bassy was of the party. Melancholy to say, three of these individuals were subsequently afflicted by aberration of intellect, and two of them, Brummel and Bassy, died in the establishment of the Bon Sauveur.”

At last it was determined that something should be done for his extrication, and his agent, Armstrong, set off for England, to beg supplies from his old friends, the good-natured noblemen and gentlemen who had so often come to his aid. The principal of these were the Duke of Beaufort and the unfailing Lord Alvanley. King William IV. gave 100*l*.; the others various handsome sums, and the result was that his agent returned with a fair amount, sufficient to enter into a composition. Lord Palmerston gave 200*l*. from the public purse.

On the morning of the 21st of July, M. Youf, an attorney, came to the prison, and notified to Brummel that his debt to Mr. Leveux had been

paid, and that he was at liberty to leave when he pleased. To the astonishment of everyone, however, he received the information without manifesting the slightest surprise or joy; or, indeed, any emotion whatever; and, at five o'clock in the afternoon, after an imprisonment of two months and seventeen days, hope and fear alternately predominating, and having experienced, with apparent calmness, many humiliations, he left his dungeon with the same forced *insouciance*, and returned to the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where he once more settled himself, in the same rooms he had occupied previously to his arrest.

“On the evening of this very day he presented himself at a large *soirée* at the general's. Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the company when he made his appearance, for they had not heard of his release; but as he advanced towards the centre of the room, everyone rose simultaneously, and congratulated him on his good fortune. Brummel, with much complacency and an air of nonchalance, bowed his thanks, and said: ‘Messieurs, je suis bien obligé pour votre bonté, et charmé de me trouver encore une fois parmi vous; je puis vous assurer que c'est aujourd'hui le plus heureux jour de ma vie, car je suis sorti de prison.’ Here he paused, and then gravely added, ‘*Et j'ai mangé du saumon.*’ But the gaiety that he displayed after his imprisonment was all assumed; it was put on to hide his real

feelings, which must have been most painful and distressing."

His money allowances were now entirely managed by his agent, 60*l.* a year being paid for his board and lodging to the landlord of the hotel, and the rest being devoted to dress, etc. Still he would not keep out of debt; but, on the whole, he managed to pass his later years without any serious discomfort or inconvenience. But now it began to be noted, as is the case with so many *viveurs* who have "lived to eat," and pamper themselves, that his mind was beginning to give way. Often this failing took an oddly humorous shape. He frequently forgot to whom he was speaking. In an English family, the members of which were extremely hospitable and kind to him, he wandered to a degree that gave rise to a most awkward scene. "One day this gentleman gave a large dinner-party, to which Brummel was invited, and his wife, who was proud of her talent in storing her larder with good things, had been indefatigable in her endeavours to make the entertainment pass off well. Brummel, who led her to the scene of her triumph, sat next to her; but he had scarcely taken his place when he commenced criticising every dish that steamed before him. 'What is that?' he inquired, pointing to one near him. '*Filet sauté aux champignons*,' replied his opposite neighbour. He tasted it, and immediately sent his plate away,

murmuring 'How tough!' Another dish he condemned as cold, and a third as execrable; and, looking at the bottom of the table, remarked in a loud aside, 'What a half-starved turkey!' The host looked indignant, the guests surprised, and, gentle reader, the lady—the lady wept! At length, Brummel's peevishness and grumbling subsided, and he ate—ay, he ate voraciously.

"The fact was he had been under the delusion that he was at the *table d'hôte*, where he never failed to find fault with everything, though, as I have before said, the fare was excellent, and where, *malgré* his complaints, he consumed enormous quantities of food.

"His vagaries frequently attracted the attention of every person at the public table, and brought all eyes upon him. Sometimes he would transfix the portion of *fricandeau* before him with his fork, and elevating the larded morsel in the air, stare wisely at it, shake his head, and exclaim, 'Bah!' but in the next minute the condemned slice of calf had disappeared.

"He also became totally indifferent to his personal appearance; not only were his clothes shabby and out of repair, but he was dirty. His tailor often observed him in the street with his coat in holes under the arms, and his trousers torn. 'J'avais honte,' he said, 'de voir un homme si célèbre et si

distingué, et qui s'était créé une place dans l'histoire, dans un état si malheureux ;' and though I could not afford to give him clothes, I frequently requested him to send me his things, and mended them for nothing." On such occasions poor Brummel was under the necessity of remaining in bed till his trousers were sent home to him by the friendly tailor ; for he had only one pair. The waiter who usually brushed his clothes, said that he was without a second pair during the last two years and a half that he remained at the hotel, and that he had observed Brummel occupied in mending them at least a year before he became imbecile.

"Though he had long given up his darling *verniss de Guiton*, nothing could induce him to forego *eau-de-Cologne*, oil for his wig, and *biscuits de Rheims* for his luncheon ; and as he could not obtain credit for these coveted articles—for Mr. Armstrong declined paying for them—he used occasionally to beg them at the shops where he had formerly dealt. As long as he could get out he went to a confectioner's in front of the hotel every day at two o'clock, to eat two of his favourite biscuits, which were always flavoured with a glass of curaçoa or maraschino ; for some time they were paid for with a bow, but this polite remuneration did not long satisfy Monsieur Magdelaine ; and Brummel, to satisfy his *penchant*, now a passion, was obliged to sell or pawn the few valuables

he had left. Some porcelain vases, another watch, seals, and a chain, and other articles of jewellery, were parted with in like manner, and even his last silver snuff-box was pledged."

What an ironical turn of fortune is in the following!—"Many of those who had previously sought his society with eagerness, now studiously avoided him; for he was, in the idiom of our language, a great bore, and the sarcasm that he once unmercifully dealt to others, was now levelled at himself—in utter disregard of his mental helplessness. A *ci-devant* French associate, who was sitting next to him at a Philharmonic concert this winter, alluding to the perpetual movement of his lower jaw, which had become habitual since the loss of his teeth, addressed him thus: 'Mon cher Brummel, s'il faut absolument que vous mâchiez, du moins mâchez en mesure.' At the *soirées* which he occasionally attended, previously to his disappearing from society entirely, some of his acquaintance would ask him in a satirical tone, 'how he got invited?'"

The well-known story of one of the later stages of the malady—the lighting up his rooms, his rising to receive ghostly guests, "the Duchess of Devonshire," etc.—appears to be true. More pitiable and degrading were the last stages. It was a curious Nemesis that the once fashionable dandy—he who spent hours on his toilet, who was so particular about the fold of a

neckcloth—should at the end fall into such a state of degradation and neglect of his person as to be at last unendurable by those near him. Finally—the last stage of all, which ends his eventful history—some charitable people obtained his admission into the St. Sauveur Hospital, where, attended and cared for by some nuns, he sank into imbecility, and at last was released for life in March, 1840. He was about sixty-two.

The clergyman who attended seems to have taken rather a severe view of his condition. “Mr. Brummel was in an imbecile state when I arrived at Caen, and remained so until his death, incapable of remembering any occurrence five minutes together; but occasionally recalling some anecdote of days long since passed. Mr. Brummel appeared quite incapable of conversing on religious subjects. I failed in every attempt to lead his mind (if he can be said to have retained any power of mind) to their consideration. I never, in the course of my attendance upon the sick, aged, and dying, came in contact with so painful an exhibition of human vanity and apparent ignorance and thoughtlessness of and respecting a future state; for I have before visited persons whose mental powers were equally shattered, but still it was possible to touch some chord connected with religion, to which they responded, though perhaps weakly and imperfectly:

with him there was some response, when sounded on worldly subjects ; none on religious, until a few hours before he died, when, in reply to my repeated entreaties that he would try and pray, he said, 'I do try ;' but he added something which made me doubt whether he understood me."

But when the last hour of his curious life sounded his intelligence returned. The excellent nun of the hospital who attended him, used to relate how he fixed his imploring eyes on her and faltered out some request that she would pray. She repeated for him a simple act of contrition, in which he joined. Such was the end of the man who could "only spit in silver." It may be noticed that his friend and patron, George IV., and other votaries of pleasure whose lives had been of the same pattern, expired in the same desolate fashion.

PAUL JONES.

PAUL JONES.

THE history of Paul Jones, the pirate, or privateersman, or commissioned admiral, is certainly a stirring and exciting one. His name, though perhaps not his history, is familiar to the public, who know that he was a bold, dashing sailor, who took prizes and set the King's ships at defiance. But his career is really a most interesting one, and worth pursuing.

His real name was Paul, not Jones, which was assumed late in his life. He was born in July, 1747. His father was a Scotch gardener. Early showing a taste for the sea, he made a voyage to America when he was only thirteen ; and before he was twenty was mate in a vessel engaged in the slave trade. He then retired to America, not without suspicion of being engaged in the smuggling business ; and, after a short stay there, offered his services to the Americans, then in revolt from Great Britain. At

that moment, viz., in 1775, they were engaged in trying to form a little navy, having but four or five vessels, while fifteen frigates were ordered to be built. His quick temper soon involved him in disputes, and we find him complaining of bad treatment, and of other officers being preferred to him. He was at last despatched to France, to take the command of a fine new frigate which the Americans intended to purchase there, and arrived in December, 1777. He was cordially received by the Commissioners Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee. Though war was not yet formally declared between France and Great Britain, he succeeded in obtaining a salute for his vessel from a French admiral, which he always claimed as a first recognition of the new republic.

But while waiting for the "fine new frigate," in which he met many disappointments, he filled up his time in various exploits of a daring kind in his little vessel, the *Ranger*, the most celebrated of which was his descent on the coast of Scotland. His own account of the expedition is exciting. It was in April, 1778 :

"The 22nd introduced fair weather, though the three kingdoms were, as far as the eye could reach, covered with snow. I now resolved once more to attempt Whitehaven ; but the wind became very light, so that the ship would not in proper time approach so near as I had intended. At midnight I

left the ship with two boats and thirty-one volunteers. When we reached the outer pier the day began to dawn ; I would not, however, abandon my enterprise, but despatched one boat, with the necessary combustibles, to set fire to the shipping on the north side of the harbour, while I went with the other party to attempt the south side. I was successful in scaling the walls and spiking up all the cannon on the first fort ; finding the sentinels shut up in the guard-house, they were secured without being hurt. Having fixed sentinels, I now took with me one man only (Mr. Green), and spiked up all the cannon on the southern fort, distant from the other a quarter of a mile.

“On my return from this business, I found the boat under the direction of Mr. Hill and Mr. Wallingsford returned, and the party in some confusion, their light having burnt out at the instant when it became necessary.

“By the strangest fatality, my own party were in the same situation, the candles being all burnt out. The day too came on apace, yet I would by no means retreat while any hopes of success remained. Having again placed sentinels, a light was obtained at a house disjoined from the town, and fire was kindled in the steerage of a large ship, which was surrounded by at least a hundred and fifty others, chiefly from two to four hundred tons burthen, and lying side by side, aground, unsurrounded by the water.

“There were, besides, from seventy to a hundred large ships in the north arm of the harbour, aground, clear of the water, and divided from the rest only by a stone pier of a ship’s height. After some search, a barrel of tar was found, and poured into the flames, which now ascended from all the hatchways. The inhabitants began to appear in thousands, and individuals ran hastily towards us. I stood between them and the ship on fire, with a pistol in my hand, and ordered them to retire, which they did with precipitation. The flames had already caught the rigging, and began to ascend the mainmast ; the sun was a full hour’s march above the horizon, and as sleep no longer ruled the world, it was time to retire. We embarked without opposition, having released a number of prisoners, as our boats could not carry them. After all my people had embarked, I stood upon the pier for a considerable space, yet no person advanced : I saw all the eminences round the town covered with the amazed inhabitants.

“When we had rowed to a considerable distance from the shore, the English began to run in vast numbers to their forts ; their disappointment may easily be imagined when they found, I suppose, at least thirty heavy cannon (the instruments of their vengeance) rendered useless. At length, however, they began to fire, having, as I apprehend, either brought down ships’ guns, or used one or two cannon

which lay on the beach at the foot of the walls, dismounted, and which had not been spiked. They fired with no direction, and the shot falling short of the boats, instead of doing us any damage, afforded some diversion, which my people could not help showing, by discharging their pistols, etc., in return of the salute.

“ Had it been possible to have landed a few hours sooner, success would have been complete ; not a single ship out of more than two hundred could possibly have escaped, and all the world would not have been able to save the town.”

The missing man's exertions saved the place. In a newspaper of the time, it is stated that “ a little after three o'clock this morning a man rapped at several doors in Marlborough Street (adjoining one of the piers), and informed them that fire had been set to one of the ships in the harbour ; that matches were laid in several others ; that the whole would soon be in a blaze, and the town also destroyed ; that he was one belonging to the crew, but had escaped for the purpose of saving, if possible, the town and shipping from destruction.”

The descent at Whitehaven produced consternation all over the kingdom. Expresses were immediately despatched to all the capital seaports ; all strangers in Whitehaven were immediately ordered to be arrested ; similar directions were forwarded through the country. Look-out vessels were appointed at every port ; con-

tinual meetings of the principal inhabitants were held all down the coast; companies were raised by subscription; and all forts and guns immediately put into proper condition.

In Jones's character there was a curious turn for theatrical display and high-strung sentiment, which he was fond of displaying in heroic and rather bombastic letters. This corresponded with his actions, though no doubt many of his encounters were prompted by a simple love of fame and adventure. There was something barbarous in this combination ; for when his temper had prompted him to some savage act he was eager to lend it this heroic colour. Such was his descent on Lord Selkirk's estate, St. Mary's Isle ; his plundering of the castle, with his curious *amende* to Lady Selkirk. This is set out in his letter to the lady, offering, with an air of apparent magnanimity, to restore her husband's plate. The incident reads like something out of "Les Trois Mousquetaires." It has been found that this was prompted by revenge in retaliation for the imprisonment to which Lord Selkirk had been instrumental in sentencing him years before.

TO THE COUNTESS OF SELKIRK.

" **MADAM,** " *Ranger, Brest, 8th May, 1778.*

“It cannot be too much lamented, that, in the profession of arms, *the officer of fine feelings and*

real sensibility should be under the necessity of winking at any action of persons under his command which his heart cannot approve ; but the reflection is doubly severe when he finds himself obliged, in appearance, to countenance such acts by his authority.

“ This hard case was mine, when, on the 23rd of April last, I landed on St. Mary’s Isle. Knowing Lord Selkirk’s interest with the King, and esteeming, as I do, his private character, I wished to make him the happy instrument of alleviating the horrors of hopeless captivity, when the brave are overpowered and made prisoners of war.

“ It was, perhaps, fortunate for you, madam, that he was from home ; for it was my intention to have taken him on board the *Ranger*, and to have detained him, until, through his means, a general and fair exchange of prisoners, as well in Europe as in America, had been effected. When I was informed, by some men whom I met at landing, that his lordship was absent, I walked back to my boat, determined to leave the island.

“ I had but a moment to think how I might do your ladyship the least injury. I charged the officers to permit none of the seamen to enter the house, or to hurt anything about it ; to treat you, madam, with the utmost respect ; to accept of the plate which was offered, and to come away without making a search, or demanding anything else.

“I am induced to believe that I was punctually obeyed, since I am informed that the plate which they brought away is far short of the quantity expressed in the inventory which accompanied it. I have gratified my men ; and, when the plate is sold, I shall become the purchaser, and will gratify my own feelings by restoring it to you by such conveyance as you shall please to direct.

“Had the earl been on board the *Ranger* the following evening, he would have seen the awful pomp and dreadful carnage of a sea-engagement ; both affording ample subject for the pencil as well as melancholy reflection for the contemplative mind. Humanity starts back from such scenes of horror, and cannot sufficiently execrate the vile promoters of this detestable war—

For *they*, 'twas *they*, unsheathed the ruthless blade,
And Heaven shall ask the havoc it has made.

“The British ship of war *Drake*, mounting twenty guns, with more than her full complement of officers and men, was our opponent. The ships met, and the advantage was disputed with great fortitude on each side for an hour and four minutes, when the gallant commander of the *Drake* fell, and victory declared in favour of the *Ranger*. The amiable lieutenant lay mortally wounded, besides near forty of the inferior officers and crew killed and wounded—a melancholy

demonstration of the uncertainty of human prospects, and of the sad reverse of fortune which an hour can produce. I buried them in a spacious grave, with the honours due to the memory of the brave.

“Though I have drawn my sword in the present generous struggle for the rights of men, yet I am not in arms as an American, nor am I in pursuit of riches. My fortune is liberal enough, having no wife nor family, and having lived long enough to know that riches cannot insure happiness. I profess myself a citizen of the world, totally unfettered by the little, mean distinctions of climate or of country, which diminish the benevolence of the heart, and set bounds to philanthropy. Before this war began I had at the early time of life withdrawn from the sea-service in favour of ‘calm contemplation and poetic ease.’ I have sacrificed not only my favourite scheme of life, but the softer affections of the heart and my prospects of domestic happiness, and I am ready to sacrifice my life also with cheerfulness, if that forfeiture could restore peace and goodwill among mankind.

“As the feelings of your gentle bosom cannot but be congenial with mine, let me entreat you, madam, to use your persuasive art with your husband’s to endeavour to stop this cruel and destructive war, in which Britain can never succeed. Heaven can never countenance the barbarous and unmanly practice of the Britons in America, which savages would blush at,

and which, if not discontinued, will soon be retaliated on Britain by a justly-enraged people. Should you fail in this (for I am persuaded that you will attempt it ; and who can resist the power of such an advocate ?) your endeavours to effect a general exchange of prisoners will be an act of humanity which will afford you golden feelings on a death-bed.

“I hope this cruel contest will soon be closed ; but should it continue, I wage no war with the fair. I acknowledge their force, and bend before it with submission. Let not, therefore, the amiable Countess of Selkirk regard me as an enemy ; I am ambitious of her esteem and friendship, and would do anything, consistent with my duty, to merit it.

“The honour of a line from your hand in answer to this will lay me under a singular obligation ; and if I can render you any acceptable service in France or elsewhere, I hope you see into my character so far as to command me without the least grain of reserve.

“I wish to know exactly the behaviour of my people, as I am determined to punish them if they have exceeded their liberty. I have the honour to be, with much esteem and with profound respect, madam, etc. etc.

“JOHN PAUL JONES.”

Owing, however, to difficulties with the prize courts, it took from four to five years before this

showy act of restitution could be accomplished ; when he wrote to the earl to explain the delay, giving a bombastic account of the transaction :

“ When I received Mr. Alexander’s letter, there was no cartel or other vessel at L’Orient, that I could trust with a charge of so delicate a nature as your plate, and I had great reason to expect I should return to France within six months after I embarked for America ; but circumstances in America prevented my returning to Europe during the war, though I had constant expectation of it. The long delay that has happened to the restoration of your plate has given me much concern, and I now feel a proportionate pleasure in fulfilling what was my first intention. My motive for landing at your estate in Scotland was to take *you* as an hostage for the lives and liberty of a number of the citizens of America, who had been taken in war on the ocean, and committed to British prisons, under an Act of Parliament, as *traitors, pirates, and felons*. You observed to Mr. Alexander, that ‘ my idea was a mistaken one, because you were not (as I had supposed) in favour with the British ministry, who knew that *you favoured the cause of liberty*.’ On that account I am glad that you were absent from your estate when I landed there, as I bore no personal enmity, but the contrary, towards you. I afterwards had the happiness to redeem my fellow-

citizens from Britain, by means far more glorious than through the medium of any single hostage.

“As you were so obliging as to say to Mr. Alexander, ‘*that my people behaved with great decency at your house,*’ I ask the favour of you to announce that circumstance to the public.”

The earl acknowledged the civility in handsome terms :

“The plate,” he wrote, “had at last arrived at Dumfries, and, I dare say, quite safe, though as yet I have not seen it, being then at Edinburgh. I intended to have put an article in the newspapers about your having returned it; but before I was informed of its being arrived, some of your friends, I suppose, had put it in the Dumfries newspaper, whence it was immediately copied into the Edinburgh papers, and thence into the London ones.

“Since that time I have mentioned it to many people of fashion; and on all occasions, sir, both now and formerly, I have done you the justice to tell, that you made an offer of returning the plate very soon after your return to Brest, and although you yourself were not at my house, but remained at the shore with your boat, that yet you had your officers and men in such extraordinary good discipline, that you having given them the strictest orders to behave well, to do no injury of any kind, to make no search, but only to bring off what plate was given

them; that in reality they did exactly as ordered, and that not one man offered to stir from his post, on the outside of the house, nor entered the doors, nor said an uncivil word; that the two officers stood not a quarter of an hour in the parlour and butler's pantry while the butler got the plate together; behaved politely, and asked for nothing but the plate, and instantly marched their men off in regular order; and that both officers and men behaved so well, that it would have done credit to the best-disciplined troops whatever."

The plate was returned exactly as it had been taken away; even the tea-leaves, it is said, remained in the teapot.

After pillaging the earl's castle, he sailed to the north of Ireland, off which coast he had a desperate engagement with a Government vessel, the *Drake*. Of this he gave the following account:

"On the morning of the 24th I was again off Carrickfergus, and would have gone in had I not seen the *Drake* preparing to come out; it was very moderate, and the *Drake's* boat was sent out to reconnoitre the *Ranger*. As the boat advanced I kept the ship's stern directly towards her, and, though they had a spyglass in the boat, they came on within hail, and alongside. When the officer came on the quarter-deck, he was greatly surprised to find himself a prisoner!—although *an express had arrived*

from *Whitehaven* the night before. I now understood what I had before imagined, that the *Drake* came out in consequence of this information with volunteers against the *Ranger*. The officer told me also, that they had taken up the *Ranger's* anchor.

"The *Drake* was attended by five small vessels full of people, who were led by motives of curiosity to see an engagement; but when they discovered the *Drake's* boat at the *Ranger's* stern they wisely put back. Alarm-smokes now appeared in great abundance, extending along both sides of the channel. The tide was unfavourable, so that the *Drake* worked out but slowly. This obliged me to run down several times, and to lay with courses up, and main-topsail to the mast. At length the *Drake* weathered the point, and having led her out to about mid-channel, I suffered her to come within hail. The *Drake* hoisted English colours, and at the same instant the American stars were displayed on board the *Ranger*. I expected that preface had been now at an end; but the enemy soon after halled, demanding what ship it was. I directed the master to answer, the American continental ship *Ranger*; that we waited for them, and desired they would come on. The sun was now little more than an hour from setting, it was therefore time to begin. The *Drake* being rather astern of the *Ranger*, I ordered the helm up, and gave her the first broadside. The action was

warm, close, and obstinate; it lasted an hour and five minutes, when the enemy called for quarter, her fore and main-topsail yards being both cut away, and down on the cap; the fore-top-gallant yard and mizzen-gaff both hanging up and down along the mast.

"The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded was great. All the prisoners allow that they came out with a number not less than 160 men, and many of them affirm that they amounted to 190; the medium may perhaps be the most exact account, and by that it will appear that they lost in killed and wounded 42 men.

"The captain and lieutenant were among the wounded; the former, having received a musket-ball in the head the minute before they called for quarter, lived and was sensible for some time after my people boarded the prize; the lieutenant survived two days. They were buried with the honours due to their rank, and with the respect due to their memory."

After this exploit, Jones returned to France, where, though he had gained a reputation as a daring captain, he was, however, merely beguiled with promises of a ship to be given him by the French court. He was thus long kept dangling in the antechambers, and saw ships given away to inferior men. The truth was, they wished him to

take a privateer in the French service. Paul Jones, who was of a quick temper, was soon heard making loud complaints of the minister, M. de Sartines, who, he said, "after possessing himself of my *schemes*, and *ideas*, has treated me like a child five times successively, by leading me on from great to little, and from little to less. Does such conduct do honour either to his head or to his heart? He has not to this moment offered me the least apology for any of these five deceptions; nor has he, I believe, assigned any good reason to that venerable and great character, his Excellency Doctor Franklin, whom he has made the instrument to entrap me in this cruel state of inaction and suspense.

"The minister has lately written a letter to Count D'Orvilliers, proposing to send me home in *une bonne voiture*. This is absolutely adding insult to injury, and it is the proposition of a man whose *veracity* I have not experienced in former cases.

"I have been so delicate with respect to my situation that I have been, and am considered everywhere as an officer disgraced and cast off for private reasons. I have, of course, been in actual disgrace here ever since my return, which is more than two months. I have already lost near five months of my time, the best season of the year, and such opportunities of serving my country, and *acquiring honour*, as I cannot again expect this war, while I have been

thus shamefully entrapped in inaction. My duty and sensibility cannot brook this unworthy situation. If the minister's intentions have been honourable from the beginning, *he will make a direct written apology to me*, suitable to the injury which I have sustained, otherwise, in vindication of my sacred honour, painful as it will be, I must publish in the gazettes of Europe the conduct he has held towards me."

About this time he also wrote the following letter to General Washington, forwarding an odd present :

"HONOURED SIR,

"As the scene of war by sea is now changed from America to Europe, I have been induced to give up the command of the American ship-of-war, the *Ranger*, and to continue for some time in Europe, in compliance with the request of the minister of the French marine, contained in a letter to our minister plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles. I will not intrude upon your excellency's time even by attempting to pay you the respect which you so justly command. The intention of this letter *is only to beg your acceptance of two epaulets with which it is accompanied*, and which my friend Mr. Williams, of Nantz, has undertaken to forward."

At last he obtained a vessel, which the French bought for him, the *Duc de Duras*, whose name he

at once changed. It became the famous or notorious *Bon Homme Richard*; that is, the "Poor Richard," of Dr. Franklin, drawn from his repository of proverbs. He had in his mind what "Poor Richard" says: "If you would have your business done, come yourself; if not, send."

He went down to Nantes to man his new vessel. Five hundred Irish, from one of the King's regiments, were to go on board. But he was joined with another vessel, commanded by a Frenchman, one Landais, with whom he soon quarrelled, and who seems to have treated him with some hostility, refusing to obey his signals; and this led to fresh complications, wranglings, and investigations. But Paul Jones was a man with whom no one could get on.

Thus encouraged, he actually conceived the daring scheme of a formal descent on England, and succeeded in persuading Franklin and his employers that this was feasible. The successful descents of Jones upon the coast, with a petty force and unwilling coadjutors, induced them to believe that an organised and general invasion had a great chance of being successful. On this occasion it seems, however, to have been seriously adopted, and La Fayette was desired to remain in France in consequence of this resolution. Dr. Franklin, in a confidential letter to Mr. Lovell, calls it the "grand invasion." On the 19th of April, 1779, the American squadron—*Bon Homme Richard*,

42 guns; *Alliance*, 36 guns; *Pallas*, 30 guns; *Cerf*, 18 guns; and the *Vengeance*, 12 guns—sailed from L'Orient, all under the command of the Honourable Commodore John Paul Jones.

In October, 1779, he effected yet another of those descents on the Scotch coast to which he was partial as extending a glamour of “dash” and romance to his proceedings, and which really gave him his reputation. The sense of mystery and alarm thus excited was extraordinary; and old people used to relate the story of the alarm and excitement caused by his appearance off the coast. His own accounts of his proceedings being always the most effective, naturally supply the most dramatic version.

“The winds continued to be contrary, so that we did not see the land till the evening of the 13th, when the hills of Cheviot, in the south-east of Scotland, appeared. The next day we chased sundry vessels, and took a ship and a brigantine, both from the Frith of Edinburgh, laden with coal. Knowing that there lay at anchor in Leith Road an armed ship of 20 guns, with two or three fine cutters, I formed an expedition against Leith, which I purposed to lay under contribution, or otherwise to reduce it to ashes. Had I been alone, the wind being favourable, I would have proceeded directly up the Frith, and must have succeeded, as they lay then in a state of perfect indolence and security, which would have proved their ruin.

Unfortunately for me, the *Pallas* and *Vengeance* were both at a considerable distance in the offing, they having chased to the southward. This obliged me to steer out of the Frith again to meet them. The captains of the *Pallas* and *Vengeance* being come on board the *Bon Homme Richard*, I communicated to them my project, to which many difficulties and objections were made by them. At last, however, they appeared to think better of the design, after I had assured them that I hoped to raise a contribution of 200,000*l.* sterling on Leith, and that there was no battery of cannon there to oppose our landing. So much time, however, was unavoidably spent in pointed remarks and sage deliberations that night, that the wind became contrary in the morning."

The following summons was drawn up by him, but never used.

"The Honourable J. Paul Jones, Commander-in-Chief of the American squadron now in Europe, etc., to the Worshipful the Provost of Leith, or, in his absence, to the chief magistrate who is now actually present and in authority there.

"SIR,

"The British marine force that has been stationed here for the protection of your city and commerce being now taken by the American arms under my command, I have the honour to send you

this summons by my officer, Lieutenant-Colonel De Chamillard, who commands the vanguard of my troops. I do not wish to distress the poor inhabitants; my intention is only to demand your contribution towards the reimbursement which Britain owes to the much-injured citizens of the United States ; for savages would blush at the unmanly violation and rapacity that has marked the tracks of British tyranny in America, from which neither virgin innocence nor helpless age has been a plea of protection or pity.

“Leith and its port now lies at our mercy ; and did not our humanity stay the hand of just retaliation, I should, without advertisement, lay it in ashes. Before I proceed to that stern duty as an officer, my duty as a man induces me to propose to you, by the means of a reasonable ransom, to prevent such a scene of horror and distress. For this reason, I have authorised Lieutenant-Colonel De Chamillard to conclude and agree with you on the terms of ransom, allowing you exactly half-an-hour’s reflection before you finally accept or reject the terms which he shall propose (200,000*l.*). If you accept the terms offered within the time limited, you may rest assured that no further debarkation of troops will be made, but that the re-embarkation of the vanguard will immediately follow, and that the property of the citizens shall remain unmolested. I have the honour

to be, with sentiments of due respect, sir, your very obedient and very humble servant,

“PAUL JONES.

“On board the American ship-of-war the *Bon Homme Richard*,
at anchor in the Road of Leith, September 17th, 1779.”

Paul Jones adds this significant note :

“N.B.—The sudden and violent storm which arose in the moment when the squadron was abreast of Keith Island, which forms the entrance of the Road of Leith, rendered impracticable the execution of the foregoing project.”

“The three ships,” says his biographer, “had lain so long off and on the coast, that alarm was general ; and on the 15th an express reached Edinburgh, sent to the Commander-in-Chief and to the Board of Customs, with accounts that three strange ships were seen off Eyemouth on the afternoon of the 14th, which had made two prizes ; and that a ship, supposed to mount 40 or 50 guns, was seen off Dunbar. At 5 P.M., on the 16th, they were distinctly seen from Edinburgh sailing up the Frith of Forth ; but whether they were French vessels or the squadron of Paul Jones was not yet ascertained. The alarm along the coast was become general ; batteries were hastily erected at Leith, and the incorporated trades bravely petitioned for arms, which were supplied from the

Castle of Edinburgh. Yet the audacity of the American commander so far blinded some of the spectators on the northern shores, that on the 17th a boat with five men came off from the coast of Fife to the *Bon Homme Richard*, soliciting powder and shot in name of a certain landed proprietor, who wished 'to have the means of defending himself from the expected visit of the pirate Paul Jones.' So far as powder went, this request was politely complied with; but the commodore declined sending any shot."

The prodigious sensation caused by the appearance of the squadron of Paul Jones in the Frith of Forth is hardly yet forgotten on the coast of Fife. "The 17th of September, when Jones advanced to Leith, happened to be a Sunday. His ship, the *Bon Homme Richard*, stood at times so near the northern shores as to be distinctly seen by the crowds assembled on the beach, and on the commanding heights in the neighbourhood. At one time the *Bon Homme Richard* was not more than a mile from Kirkcaldy, a thriving and wealthy seaport. The alarm was naturally very great in that town; and the Rev. Mr. Shirra, a worthy and very eccentric dissenting clergyman, remarkable for his quaint humour, instead of holding forth in the church as at ordinary times, where on this day he would have had but a thin audience, repaired to the fine level sandy beach of Kirkcaldy, and soon attracted a very numerous

congregation. Here he prayed most fervently and earnestly, with that homely and familiar eloquence by which his sermons and prayers were distinguished, that the enterprise of 'the piratical invader, Paul Jones, might be defeated.' For once, it may be believed, the hearts of a congregation went with their minister. That violent gale, so much lamented by Paul Jones, suddenly arose—the alleged consequence of Mr. Shirra's powerful intercession. Such was long the popular belief. When, in after periods, this good old man was questioned on the subject, and complimented on the prevailing spirit of his prayer, which had so opportunely raised the wind that blew off Paul Jones, his usual reply, disclaiming the full extent of the compliment, was, 'I prayed, but the Lord sent the wind.'"

The daring captain himself explains why the exploit failed.

"We continued working to windward of the Frith, without being able to reach the Road of Leith till, on the morning of the 17th, when, being almost within cannon-shot of the town, having everything in readiness for a descent, a very severe gale of wind came on, and, being directly contrary, obliged us to bear away, after having in vain endeavoured for some time to withstand its violence. The gale was so severe, that one of the prizes that were taken on the 14th sank to the bottom, the crew being with diffi-

culty saved. As the clamour had by this time reached Leith by means of a cutter that had watched our motions that morning, and as the wind continued contrary (though more moderate in the evening), I thought it impossible to pursue the enterprise with a good prospect of success, especially as Edinburgh, where there is always a number of troops, is only a mile distant from Leith; therefore I gave up the project."

After this exploit, such was his celebrity, that when he appeared on the exchange at Amsterdam, all business was suspended in order to gaze on and follow him. He was dressed in a blue frock-coat, with cloth waistcoat, and a broadsword under his arm. When he quitted the exchange, the crowd followed him to his lodgings, and huzzaed him all the way home.

We next find him and his now well-known vessel, the *Bon Homme Richard*, engaged in desperate conflict with an English vessel-of-war, the *Serapis*, carrying forty-four guns, commanded by Captain Pearson. This exploit excited the attention of all Europe, from its ferocious character, and certainly was fought with a determination on both sides that was heroic. But it will be seen there were incidents in it of a savage and treacherous character, which stamp the redoubtable Paul Jones as a buccaneer or even a pirate.

Paul Jones had three vessels with him. One, however, under Landais, he insisted, was almost as hostile to him as the enemy. He was cruising off Flamborough Head, capturing small vessels, when he descried a large convoy under the care of two ships-of-war.

The *Serapis*, we are told, forty-four guns, was one of the finest frigates in his Majesty's navy, and had been off the stocks only a few months. Her crew were picked men, and she was commanded by Captain Richard Pearson, an officer celebrated even in the British navy for his undaunted courage and exemplary conduct. The *Bon Homme Richard* was an old ship with decayed timbers, and had made four voyages to the East Indies. Many of her guns were useless, and all were ancient. Her crew consisted partly of Americans, partly of French, partly of English, and partly of Maltese, Portuguese, and Malays; and this crew was weak also in numbers, for two boats' crews had been lost on the coast of Ireland; and, to add to accumulated misfortunes, Jones's first lieutenant and eighteen men in the pilot-boat did not join the *Bon Homme Richard* in time for battle. The Portuguese and the other foreigners could speak neither French nor English; and, chattering in their native tongues without ceasing, added not a little to the difficulties which presented themselves. The American commander had nothing to trust to but his own courage and extraordinary skill.

The battle that followed he thus describes in a letter to Franklin :

“On the morning of that day, the 23rd, the brig from Holland not being in sight, we chased a brigantine that appeared lying to, to windward. About noon we saw and chased a large ship that appeared coming round Flamborough Head from the northward, and at the same time I manned and armed one of the pilot-boats to send in pursuit of the brigantine, which now appeared to be the vessel that I had forced ashore. Soon after this a fleet of forty-one sail appeared off Flamborough Head, bearing north-north-east. This induced me to abandon the single ship which had then anchored in Burlington Bay; I also called back the pilot-boat, and hoisted a signal for a general chase. When the fleet discovered us bearing down, all the merchant ships crowded sail towards the shore. The two ships-of-war that protected the fleet at the same time steered from the land, and made the disposition for battle. In approaching the enemy, I crowded every possible sail, and made the signal for the line of battle, to which the *Alliance* showed no attention. Earnest as I was for the action, I could not reach the commodore's ship until seven in the evening, being then within pistol-shot, when he hailed the *Bon Homme Richard*. We answered him by firing a whole broadside.

“The battle being thus begun, was continued

with unremitting fury. Every method was practised on both sides to gain an advantage, and rake each other; and I must confess that the enemy's ship, being much more manageable than the *Bon Homme Richard*, gained thereby several times an advantageous situation, in spite of my best endeavours to prevent it. As I had to deal with an enemy of greatly superior force, I was under the necessity of closing with him, to prevent the advantage which he had over me in point of manœuvre. It was my intention to lay the *Bon Homme Richard* athwart the enemy's bow; but as that operation required great dexterity in the management of both sails and helm, and some of our braces being shot away, it did not exactly succeed to my wish. The enemy's bowsprit, however, came over the *Bon Homme Richard's* poop by the mizzen-mast, and I made both ships fast together in that situation, which, by the action of the wind on the enemy's sails, forced her stern close to the *Bon Homme Richard's* bow, so that the ships lay square alongside of each other, the yards being all entangled, and the cannon of each ship touching the opponent's. When this position took place it was eight o'clock, previous to which the *Bon Homme Richard* had received sundry eighteen-pound shots below the water, and leaked very much. My battery of twelve-pounders, on which I had placed my chief dependence, being commanded by Lieutenant Dale

and Colonel Weibert, and manned principally with American seamen and French volunteers, was entirely silenced and abandoned. As to the six old eighteen-pounders that formed the battery of the lower gun-deck, they did no service whatever, except firing eight shot in all. Two out of three of them burst at the first fire, and killed almost all the men who were stationed to manage them. Before this time, too, Colonel De Chamillard, who commanded a party of twenty soldiers on the poop, had abandoned that station after having lost some of his men. I had now only two pieces of cannon (nine-pounders) on the quarter-deck that were not silenced, and not one of the heavier cannon was fired during the rest of the action. The purser, M. Mease, who commanded the guns on the quarter-deck, being dangerously wounded in the head, I was obliged to fill his place, and with great difficulty rallied a few men, and shifted over one of the lee quarter-deck guns, so that we afterwards played three pieces of nine-pounders upon the enemy. The tops alone seconded the fire of this little battery, and held out bravely during the whole of the action, especially the main-top, where Lieutenant Stack commanded. I directed the fire of one of the three cannon against the mainmast, with double-headed shot, while the other two were exceedingly well served with grape and canister shot, to silence the enemy's musketry and clear her decks, which was at last effected. The

enemy were, as I have since understood, on the instant of calling for quarter, when the cowardice or treachery of three of my under-officers induced them to call to the enemy. The English commodore asked me if I demanded quarter, and I having answered him in the most determined negative, they renewed the battle with double fury. They were unable to stand the deck ; but the fire of their cannon, especially the lower battery, which was entirely formed of ten-pounders, was incessant ; both ships were set on fire in various places, and the scene was dreadful beyond the reach of language. To account for the timidity of my three under-officers—I mean the gunner, the carpenter, and the master-at-arms—I must observe that the two first were slightly wounded, and, as the ship had received various shot under water, and one of the pumps being shot away, the carpenter expressed his fears that she would sink, and the other two concluded that she was sinking, which occasioned the gunner to run aft on the poop, without my knowledge, to strike the colours. Fortunately for me, a cannon-ball had done that before, by carrying away the ensign-staff ; he was therefore reduced to the necessity of sinking, as he supposed, or of calling for quarter, and he preferred the latter.

“ All this time the *Bon Homme Richard* had sustained the action alone, and the enemy, though much superior in force, would have been very glad to

have got clear, as appears by their own acknowledgments, and by their having let go an anchor the instant that I laid them on board, by which means they would have escaped, had I not made them well fast to the *Bon Homme Richard*.

“ At last, at half-past nine o’clock, the *Alliance* appeared, and I now thought the battle at an end ; but, to my utter astonishment, he discharged a broadside full into the stern of the *Bon Homme Richard*. We called to him for God’s sake to forbear firing into the *Bon Homme Richard* ; yet they passed along the off-side of the ship, and continued firing. There was no possibility of his mistaking the enemy’s ships for the *Bon Homme Richard*, there being the most essential difference in their appearance and construction. Besides, it was then full moonlight, and the sides of the *Bon Homme Richard* were all black, while the sides of the prize were all yellow. Yet, for the greater security, I showed the signal of our reconnaissance by putting out three lanterns, one at the head, another at the stern, and the third in the middle, in a horizontal line. Every tongue cried that he was firing into the wrong ship, but nothing availed ; he passed round, firing into the *Bon Homme Richard*’s head, stern, and broadside ; and by one of his volleys killed several of my best men, and mortally wounded a good officer on the forecastle only. My situation was really deplorable ;

the *Bon Homme Richard* received various shot under water from the *Alliance*; the leak gained on the pumps, and the fire increased much on board both ships. Some officers persuaded me to strike, of whose courage and good sense I entertain a high opinion. My treacherous master-at-arms let loose all my prisoners without my knowledge, and my prospects became gloomy indeed. I would, not, however, give up the point. The enemy's mainmast began to shake, their firing decreased fast, ours rather increased, and the British colours were struck at half an hour past ten o'clock.

"This prize proved to be the British ship of war *Serapis*, a new ship of forty-four guns, built on the most approved construction, with two complete batteries, one of them eighteen-pounders, and commanded by the brave Commodore Richard Pearson. I had yet two enemies to encounter, far more formidable than the Britons; I mean fire and water. The *Serapis* was attacked only by the first, but the *Bon Homme Richard* was assailed by both; there was five feet water in the hold, and though it was moderate from the explosion of so much gunpowder, yet the three pumps that remained could with difficulty only keep the water from gaining. The fire broke out in various parts of the ship, in spite of all the water that could be thrown in to quench it, and at length broke out as low as the powder magazine,

and within a few inches of the powder. In that dilemma I took out the powder upon deck, ready to be thrown overboard at the last extremity, and it was ten o'clock the next day (the 24th) before the fire was entirely extinguished. With respect to the situation of the *Bon Homme Richard*, the rudder was cut entirely off, the stern-frame and transoms were almost entirely cut away, and the timbers by the lower deck, especially from the mainmast towards the stern, being greatly decayed with age, were mangled beyond my power of description, and a person must have been an eye-witness to form a just idea of the tremendous scene of carnage, wreck, and ruin, which everywhere appeared.

“After the carpenters, as well as Captain Cottineau and other men of sense, had well examined and surveyed the ship (which was not finished before five in the evening), I found every person to be convinced that it was impossible to keep the *Bon Homme Richard* afloat, so as to reach a port, if the wind should increase, it being then only a very moderate breeze. I had but little time to remove my wounded, which now became unavoidable, and which was effected in the course of the night and next morning. I was determined to keep the *Bon Homme Richard* afloat, and, if possible, to bring her into port. For that purpose the first lieutenant of the *Pallas* continued on board with a party of men, to attend the pumps,

with boats in waiting, ready to take them on board in case the water should gain on them too fast. The wind augmented in the night, and the next day, the 25th, so that it was impossible to prevent the good old ship from sinking. They did not abandon her till after nine o'clock ; the water was then up to the lower deck, and a little after ten I saw, with inexpressible grief, the last glimpse of the *Bon Homme Richard*. No lives were lost with the ship, but it was impossible to save the stores of any sort whatever. I lost even the best part of my clothes, books, and papers ; and several of my officers lost all their clothes and effects."

One of the incidents of this exciting conflict was this taking fire of the *Bon Homme*.

"The powder-monkeys of the *Serapis*, finding no officer to receive the eighteen-pound cartridges, which it was their duty to supply, threw them on the main-deck and then went off for more. These cartridges being scattered along the deck, and many of them being broken, it so happened that some of the hand-grenades thrown from the fore-yard of the *Bon Homme*, which was directly over the main-hatch of the *Serapis*, fell upon this powder and produced a most awful explosion. The effect was terrific ; more than twenty of the English were blown to pieces. Pearson, as he afterwards acknowledged, was now on the point of surrendering, when the cowardice of three of the

under-officers of the *Bon Homme* induced them to call out 'quarter!' The English commander personally demanded of Jones whether he surrendered; the American commander said 'No.'

"The action now commenced with redoubled fury; Jones still succeeded in keeping the enemy's deck clear; but the fire of their cannon, especially of the lower battery which was formed of eighteen-pounders, was incessant. Both ships were now on fire in several places. The *Bon Homme* was several times under the necessity of suspending the combat to extinguish the flames, which were often within a few inches of the magazine."

This incident of calling for quarter and affecting to surrender, which is thus "glozed" over, was in reality a piece of treachery worthy of a buccaneer.

In his own account of the engagement, in which there are many falsehoods, we read of this most treacherous act, the striking his colours, and thus inviting the English to board and take possession, when they found themselves betrayed into an ambuscade—a motley crew of ruffians lying down behind the bulwarks and starting up to attack them. The English, fortunately, extricated themselves and got back to their ship. According to Captain Pearson, the other vessels bore down on the English and sailed round them, pouring in destructive broadsides, which swept the decks, and which the English were unable

to reply to ; for one of the incidents of this horrible conflict was the prodigious use, by Paul Jones, of what were called "stink-pots," and other combustibles, which his savage crew showered into the English vessels with deadly effect. A number of cartridges were thus fired, which blew up half the deck and disabled many of the cannon.

This disproves the incredible charge against his colleague, Captain Landais, of firing into the *Bon Homme Richard*. During the fight, Paul Jones, who was dressed in a short jacket and long trousers, with charged pistols slung in a belt and a cutlass in his hand, shot seven of his own men for deserting their quarters, and fired at the legs of his nephew, whom he thought a little dastardly.

Such was the fate of the daring craft, the *Bon Homme Richard*. The national pride was wounded at finding the finest frigate of the English Navy captured close to the English shores, and in the sight of assembled thousands. All the newspapers and journals of the day were filled with panic-stricken rumours.

A letter from Sunderland, dated September 20th, says that "an express arrived there on the 6th, from Aymouth, with information that Paul Jones was off there with five sail of ships-of-war, 2000 troops on board ; that, on the 19th, they appeared off Sunderland and came up within two miles, which put

the inhabitants into great confusion, as they expected them to land every hour, or destroy the ships in the harbour."

And in a letter from Stockton, September 21st, 1779, we read: "On Saturday noon, two gentlemen of the corporation of Hull arrived express at the Admiralty, with the alarming account that the celebrated American corsair, Paul Jones, had entered the river Humber on Thursday last, and chased a vessel to within a mile of the pier, when he sank, burnt, and destroyed sixteen sail of valuable vessels, which threw the whole town and neighbourhood into the utmost consternation. He had taken nine or ten colliers and other vessels a day or two before he appeared at Hull. The following is the force of Jones's squadron:

"A Boston-built frigate, with 40 guns upon one deck (Jones's ship).

"A French ship (an old Indiaman) of 44 guns.

"Two American frigates of 32 guns each, new.

"One 20-gun frigate.

"Two brigantines of 18 guns each.

"Two small tenders.

"On Saturday night another express arrived at the Admiralty from Hull, with the further disagreeable intelligence that Paul Jones's squadron, after having done more mischief in the shipping on Friday, had fallen in with the Baltic fleet and had taken

their convoy, the *Serapis* man-of-war, of 44 guns, Captain Pearson, and the armed ship the *Countess of Scarborough*, Captain Piercy, of 24 guns. This action was seen by thousands of spectators; the other ships of Jones's squadron were making havoc among the fleet, most of which, however, had taken shelter near Flamborough Head.

“ From four captured Americans it was discovered that it was Jones's plan to alarm the coasts of Wales, Ireland, the western parts of Scotland and the North Channel. Jones took several prizes on the coast of Ireland (particularly two armed transports with stores for New York), in the North Sea, and near the Frith of Forth, and had it in his power to have burnt Leith, but his orders are only to burn shipping; the squadron is now but weakly manned, owing to the great number of prizes he has taken, and it therefore may fall an easy conquest to the sixteen sail of men-of-war who have orders to go after him.

“ The *Serapis* man-of-war lost her mainmast, bowsprit, and mizzen-topmast before she struck, and the captain of the *Scarborough* made an exceeding good defence against one of the 32-gun frigates; the enemy's 44-gun ship was not in the action, and the *Serapis* struck to Jones's ship and the 32-gun frigate.

“ Expresses also arrived on Saturday from Sunderland, stating that Paul Jones had taken sixteen sail

more of colliers. In consequence of the capture of so many colliers, and the interruption of the trade, the price of coals will be enormous.

“The master of a sloop from Harwich, who arrived yesterday, saw, on Saturday last, no less than eleven sail of men-of-war going in search of Paul Jones, and among them was the *Edgar*, of 74 guns. By the examination of the four men belonging to one of Paul Jones’s squadron, it appears that Jones’s orders were not to burn any houses or towns—what an example of honour and greatness does America thus show to us! While our troops are running about from town to town on their coast, and burning everything with wanton, wicked barbarity, Dr. Franklin gives no orders to retaliate—he is above it; and there was a time when an English minister was above it, when an English minister would have disdained to make war in so villanous a mode. It is a disgrace to the nation. Paul Jones could have burned Leith the other day with the greatest ease, and another little town near it. Yesterday, Lord Sandwich informed some Russian merchants, who waited on him, that twenty of his Majesty’s ships were sent in quest of Paul Jones.”

Having taken his vessels to the Texel, the English, who were very sore about their defeat, made urgent demands to the Dutch for his surrender, protesting against the shelter given to him. Sir

Joseph Yorke, the minister, demanded the delivery unto the King, his master, "of a certain Paul Jones, a subject of the King, who, according to treaties and the laws of war, could only be considered as a rebel and a pirate." Their high mightinesses answered and said: "That they would in no respect whatever pretend to judge of the legality or illegality of the actions of those who had, upon the open sea, taken any vessels which did not belong to Holland, and brought them into the ports of the republic."

An English squadron cruised off the Texel, waiting for him to come out. It was pressed on the Dutch that Jones had no commission from the French, while the American commission could not be recognised without war with England. Jones, however, persistently refused the French commission. His vessels never belonged to the French Government, and were at last sent away under convoy of the Dutch, to the annoyance of the English.

Jones, however, was left behind in a single American vessel. But one morning, taking advantage of a favouring breeze, he suddenly dashed from his retreat, and, "in spite of all their cruising ships and squadrons," fairly made his escape. "I am, my dear philosopher," he writes to M. Dumas, "this moment arrived here. We have made our way good through the Channel in spite of the utmost efforts of Britain to prevent it. I had the pleasure of

laughing at their expense as we passed the Downs, in spite of their ships of war, and along the coast in full view of the Isle of Wight."

In this critical position, this extraordinary man did not forget his theatrical *rôle*. There was a young lady to whom he was attached, or at least paying attention to, and he found a moment to forward to her some sentimental verses. "To show you," he writes, "that I am entirely disposed to obey you, I have enclosed *un petit badinage* for the *virgin muse*; but if I do not find critical mercy, you shall not take me in so a second time."

VERSES WRITTEN ON BOARD THE "ALLIANCE," OFF USHANT, THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, 1781, IMMEDIATELY AFTER ESCAPING OUT OF THE TEXEL FROM THE BLOCKADE OF THE BRITISH FLEET; BEING IN ANSWER TO A PIECE WRITTEN AND SENT TO THE TEXEL BY A YOUNG LADY AT THE HAGUE.

TO MISS DUMAS.

Were I, Paul Jones, dear maid, the "King of Sea,"
 I find such merit in thy virgin song,
 A coral crown with bays I'd give to thee,
 A car, which on the waves should smoothly glide along;
 The Nereides all about thy side should wait,
 And gladly sing in triumph of thy state,
 "Vivat, vivat!" the happy virgin muse!
 Of Liberty the friend, whom tyrant Power pursues!

Or, happier lot! were fair Columbia free
 From British tyranny; and youth still mine,
 I'd tell a tender tale to one like thee
 With artless looks, and breast as pure as thine.

If she approved my flame, distrust apart,
Like faithful turtles, we'd have but one heart;
Together, then, we'd tune the silver lyre,
As Love or sacred Freedom should our lays inspire.

After these exploits his fame, as may be conceived, extended. The King of France presented him with a magnificent sword, and offered him one of his orders. Still he seems to have been scarcely treated with cordiality even by his own countrymen. A large frigate, which was being equipped specially for him, was given to another when nearly completed; and he was particularly insulted by being offered the command of a privateer by the French Government. The truth was, he was merely regarded as a bold buccaneer. The distrustful feeling with which he was looked upon by the French court, together with the nervous anxiety to keep him in good-humour, will be seen by the letter of one of the ministers to him, the Duc de la Vauguyon, who wrote to him this very soothing and complimentary epistle:

"I perceive with pain, my dear commodore, that you do not view your situation in the right light; and I can assure you that the ministers of the King have no intention to cause you the least disagreeable feeling, as the honourable testimonials of the esteem of his Majesty which I send you ought to convince you. I hope you will not doubt the sincere desire

with which you have inspired me to procure you every satisfaction you may merit. I flatter myself to renew before long the occasion, and to procure you the means to increase still more the glory you have already acquired. I am already occupied with all the interest I promised you ; and if my views are realised, as I have every reason to believe, you will be at all events perfectly content ; but I must pray you not to hinder my project by delivering yourself to the expression of those strong sensations to which you appear to give way, and for which there is really no foundation. You appear to possess full confidence in the justice and kindness of the King ; rely also upon the same sentiments on the part of his ministers."

"I have not a heart of stone," says Jones, in answer to the duke, "but am duly sensible of the obligation conferred on me by the very kind and affectionate letter that you have done me the honour to write me. Were I to form my opinion of the ministry from the treatment that I experienced while at Brest, or from their want of confidence in me afterwards, exclusive of what has taken place since I had the misfortune to enter this port, I will appeal to your excellency, as a man of candour and ingenuity, whether I ought to desire to prolong a connection that has made me so unhappy, and wherein I have given so very little satisfaction. I may add here,

that with a force so ill-composed, and with powers so limited, I ran ten chances of ruin and dishonour for one of gaining reputation ; and had not the plea of humanity in favour of the unfortunate Americans in English dungeons superseded all consideration of self, I faithfully assure you, my lord, that I would not have proceeded under such circumstances from Groa."

On his arrival in Paris after all his exploits, he was loaded with honours and attentions. The nation who were so thankful for small mercies as to make a hero of one of their admirals who had succeeded in *escaping* from the English fleet, and getting home in safety, were likely enough to give an ovation to the conqueror of the *Serapis*. At all public places, the audience rose ; he was followed by crowds, and was the hero of the hour. By special desire of the King he was introduced at court. He was presented by his Majesty with a sword, "which would have done honour to the greatest admiral in history," with this inscription : "*Vindicati maris, Ludovicus XVI. remunerator strenuo vindici.*" M. De Sartine wrote him a letter, expressing his Majesty's approbation of his conduct, and assuring him of his personal esteem ; and the permission of Congress was asked to invest him with the cross and institution of Military Merit.

"The famous Paul Jones dines and sups here very

often," writes Miss Edes, a young English lady at Versailles. "He is a smart man of thirty-six, speaks but little French, appears to be an extraordinary genius, a poet as well as a hero; a few days ago he wrote some verses extempore, of which I send you a copy. He is greatly admired here, especially by the ladies, who are all wild for love of him, as he for them; but he adores Lady —— (the Countess Lavendal), who has honoured him with every mark of politeness and distinction."

As a hero he enjoyed the smiles of the fair; and he had in truth a most romantic temper, that indulged itself in most high-flown devotion and Quixote-like passion. A young French lady, whom he addressed as Delia, was quite infatuated by him. She offered him her diamonds "and effects of all kinds, which may be readily converted into cash," having heard that his crew were deprived of their prize money. She would sit before his portrait for hours, bathed in tears. She wished to follow him to America in his vessel when she would be "content to be the covert of his crew." This chapter, indeed, of his loves makes his character, as it were, complete. He was said, indeed, "to have been in love with every lady in Paris." The passion of Delia, however, was demonstrative. "Heaven," she writes, "will reunite us, and watch over the fate of two beings who love faithfully, and whose upright hearts deserve to be

happy. I incessantly address myself to Heaven for your safe arrival in America. If you are satisfied with that Government you will continue in its service; if not, resign, and rejoin your faithful friend. The whole world besides may forsake you, but her heart is eternally yours. You inquire how you can render me happy—take care of yourself; love me, study the means of enabling us to pass our lives together, and never forget that my life is bound up in yours.”

Here is another specimen :

“I wrote my lovely Delia various letters from Philadelphia. Since I came here I have not had a single good opportunity to write to Europe. This situation is doubly irksome to me, my lovely friend, as it stops my pursuit of honour as well as love. It is now more than twelve months since I left France, yet I have not received a single letter from thee in all that time, except the one written in answer to my letter at taking leave. That one is a tender letter indeed, and does honour to thy matchless heart. I read often, and always with transport, the many charming things that are expressed in thy letters, but especially the last. Thy adieu has in it all the finer feelings blended with the noblest sentiments of the heart. Providence, all just and good, has given thee a soul worthy to animate Nature’s fairest work. I

rest, therefore, assured, that absence will not diminish but refine the pure and spotless friendship that binds our souls together, and will ever impress each to merit the affection of the other. Remember and believe my letter at parting ; it was but a faint picture of my heart. I will find opportunities to write, and be everything thou canst wish."

Delia's answer ran :

"Is it possible that you are then so near me, and that I am deprived of the sight of a mortal who has constituted the misery of my life for four years? Oh! most amiable and most ungrateful of men, come to your best friend, who burns with the desire of seeing you. You ought to know that it is but eight days since your Delia was at the brink of the grave. Come, in the name of Heaven !"

But a really amusing incident, which must have entertained the cynical French courtiers, was his devotion to a wily French lady, the Comtesse de Lavendal, who beguiled the buccaneer ; or, rather, what is called "made a fool of him." Her husband was in the country. She was young and beautiful, lived at Versailles, and drew portraits.

"Since my last," wrote Miss Edes, "Paul Jones drank tea and supped here. If I am in love with him, for love I may die. I have as many rivals as

there are ladies ; but the most formidable is still the Countess Lavendal, who possesses all his heart. This lady is of high rank and virtue, very sensible, good-natured, and affable. Besides this, she is possessed of youth, beauty, and wit, and every other female accomplishment. He is gone, I suppose, for America. They correspond, and his letters are replete with elegance, sentiment, and delicacy. She drew his picture—a striking likeness—and wrote some lines under it, which are much admired, and presented it to him, who, since he received it, is, he says, like a second Narcissus, in love with his own resemblance ; to be sure he is the most agreeable sea-wolf one would wish to meet with.”

His head seemed to have been turned by her flattering attention. She painted his picture, with which he said she had made him in love, “because you had condescended to draw it.” He asked for hers, which she graciously accorded. But all this was leading him on into a pitfall. When he left Paris he wrote to her :

“I am deeply concerned in all that respects your happiness ; I therefore have been, and am, much affected at some words that fell, *in private conversation*, from Mademoiselle Edes the evening I left Versailles. I am afraid that you are less happy than I wish, and am sure you deserve to be. I am composing a cipher for a key to our future corre-

spondence, so that you will be able to write to me very freely and without risk. It is a small dictionary of particular words, with a number annexed to each of them. In our letters we will write sometimes the corresponding number instead of the word, so that the meaning can never be understood, until the corresponding words are interlined over the numbers.

"I beseech you to accept the within lock. I am sorry that it is now eighteen inches shorter than it was three months ago. If I could send you my heart itself, or anything else that could afford you pleasure, it would be my happiness to do it. *Before* I had the honour of seeing you, I wished to comply with the invitation of my lodge; and I need not add, that I have *since* formed *stronger* reasons that have impelled me to seek after the means of visiting France again as soon as possible."

She was like one of those deceitful countesses in a comedy, who lead on their admirers only to laugh at them. What her answer was may be gathered from his reply:

"MADAM,

"Since I had the honour to receive your packet from Versailles, I have carefully examined the copy of my letter from Nantes, but am still at a loss, and cannot conceive, what part of the letter itself could have occasioned your imagining I had

mistaken the address. As for the little packet it contained, perhaps it might better have been omitted: if so, it is easily destroyed. If my letter has given you even a moment's uneasiness, I can assure you that to think so would be as severe a punishment as could be inflicted upon me. However I may have been mistaken, my intention could never have been to give you the most distant offence. I was greatly honoured by the visit of the count, your husband, and am so well convinced of his superior understanding, that I am glad to believe Miss Edes was mistaken. I admire him so much, that I should esteem myself very happy indeed to have a joint expedition with him by sea and land; though I am certain that his laurels would far exceed mine. I mention this, because M. de Genet has both spoken and written to me on the subject as from the count himself.

"I have within these few days had the honour to receive from his Majesty the Cross of Military Merit, with a sword that is worthy the royal giver, and a letter which I ardently wish to deserve. I hold the sword in too high estimation to risk its being taken by the enemy; and therefore propose to deposit it in the care of a friend. None can be ~~more~~ more worthy of that sacred deposit than you, madam; and if you will do me the honour to be its guardian, I shall esteem myself under an additional obligation

to deserve your ribbon, and to prove myself worthy of the title of your knight. I promised to send you a particular account of my late expedition; but the late extraordinary events that have taken place, with respect to the frigate *Alliance*, make me wish to postpone that relation until after a court-martial in America shall have furnished evidence for many circumstances that would, from a simple assertion, appear romance and founded on vanity. The only reason for the revolt on board the *Alliance* was, because the men were not paid either wages or prize-money; and because one or two envious persons persuaded them that I had concurred with M. de Chaumont to defraud them, and to keep them in Europe during the war, which, God knows, was not true. For I was bound directly for America; and far from concurring with M. de Chaumont I had not even written or spoken to him, but had highly resented his mean endeavours to keep the poor men out of their just rights, which was the only business that brought me to court in April.

“If I am to have the honour of writing you from beyond sea, you will find that the cipher I had the honour to send you may be necessary; because I would not wish all my informations to be understood, in case my letters should fall into the hands of the enemy. I shall communicate no idea in cipher

that will offend even such great delicacy as yours ; but as you are a philosopher, and as friendship has nothing to do with sex, pray what harm is there in wishing to have the picture of a friend ? ”

The lady, however, declined the odd custody of the sword. After this surprising rebuff, which was no doubt retailed in all the *salons*, Paul still maintained a correspondence with her ; but it was of the most stiff and ceremonious kind, and even sent, “ under cover ” to another person.

All this time he was contending for his “ rights,” pressing for prize-money, disputing about “ his prisoners,” as he called them, but obtaining no satisfaction. He at last quitted France in disgust, and went back to America. From neither Government did he receive anything but empty compliments and promises. When the Americans assured him of the command of a magnificent frigate just completed in the French dockyards, they made her a present to the French King, who had just lost a vessel of his own. He left the United States furnished with a complimentary letter to the King :

TO HIS MOST CHRISTIAN MAJESTY, LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE
AND NAVARRE.

“ GREAT AND BELOVED FRIEND,

“ We, the United States in Congress assembled in consideration of the distinguished marks of appro-

bation with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour the Chevalier John Paul Jones, as well as from a sense of his merit, have unanimously directed a medal of gold to be struck and presented to him, in commemoration of his valour and brilliant services while commanding a squadron of French and American ships, under our flag and commission, off the coast of Great Britain, in the late war.

“As it is his earnest desire to acquire greater knowledge in his profession, we cannot forbear requesting of your Majesty to permit him to embark in your fleets of evolution, where only it will be probably in his power to acquire that degree of knowledge which may hereafter render him more extensively useful.

“Permit us to repeat to your Majesty our sincere assurances that the various and important benefits for which we are indebted to your friendship will never cease to interest us in whatever may concern the happiness of your Majesty, your family, and people. We pray God to keep you, our great and beloved friend, under his Holy protection.

“Done at the city of New York, the 16th day of October, in the Year of our Lord 1787, and of our Sovereignty and Independence the 12th.”

It is interesting to know that this remarkable man sat for his bust to Houdon, that eminent sculptor whose sitting statue of Voltaire is known to all

visitors to the *salons* of the Français, and is one of the most striking performances existing. This he presented to Jefferson, and it may be presumed is still in the United States.

He next found his way to Copenhagen, on a sort of informal mission in reference to a claim of prize-money or compensation for some American vessels seized by the Danes. In this he had not much success. It is amusing to find his vanity engaged in the affair of his bust and some medals, which throw light on his theatrical temper of mind.

“Some of my friends in America did me the honour to ask for my bust. I inclose the names of eight gentlemen, to each of whom I promised to send one. You will oblige me much, by desiring Mr. Houdon to have them prepared and packed up two and two. I hope that his remittance may be sufficient to pay Mr. Houdon and the expense of striking the medal with which I am honoured by the United States. I shall want four gold medals as soon as the dies are finished. I must present one to the United States, another to the King of France, and I cannot do less than offer one to the Empress. As you will keep the dies for me, it is my intention to have some gold medals struck ; therefore I beg you, in the meantime, not to permit the striking of a single silver or copper medal. There is a medallist who executed three medals for me in wax. One of them

is the battle between the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis*. The position of the two ships is not much amiss; but the accessory figures are much too near the principal objects; and he has placed them to windward instead of being, as they really were, to leeward of the *Bon Homme Richard* and *Serapis*. It would be of use to see the medal he has made, although it is by no means to be copied."

When he was at Copenhagen he conceived a new and adventurous design. He had determined to repair to St. Petersburg and offer his services to the Empress Catherine, who gladly accepted them.

Many French and other writers on Russian history have recounted this portion of his singular career—among others, Castéra. All join in saying that it was his jealousy and violent temper that caused him to be deprived of his commands, and made it impossible for anyone to co-operate with him. It seems certain, too, after the same authorities, that it was the positive objection of the English officers in the Russian service to fight under the same flag with a renegade and a pirate, that caused the Empress to send him away to the Caspian Sea. The Russians were at this time engaged in a war with the Turks, and the new admiral was to share a command with the Prince of Nassau off Cherson. But the appointment of a stranger was deeply resented; and after numerous encounters, in which his

talent and knowledge signally contributed to the defeat of the enemy, the intrigues of the officers of a corrupt court drove him from the service after a few months' employment. This was contrived by that notorious favourite Prince Potemkin, who sent him an insulting order to "fight courageously," an invitation which he resented as unnecessary. But a more serious attempt was set on foot to ruin him when he returned to St. Petersburg, a grave criminal charge being preferred against him. Fortunately, he was enabled to dispose of it by producing good evidence, and he was further protected by the assistance of Count de Segur, who gives this account of the whole affair :

"His enemies," he says, "unable to bear the triumph of a man whom they treated as a vagabond, a rebel, and a corsair, resolved to destroy him. This atrocity, which ought to be imputed to some envious cowards, was, I think, very unjustly attributed to the English officers in the Russian Navy, and to the merchants who were their countrymen. The American rear-admiral was favourably welcomed at court, often invited to dinner by the Empress, and received with distinction into the best society in the city ; on a sudden, Catherine commanded him to appear no more in her presence. He was informed that he was accused of a crime, and that probably he would be tried by the Courts of Admiralty, in

which there were many English officers, who were strongly prejudiced against him. As soon as this order was known, everyone abandoned the unhappy American; no one spoke to him, people avoided saluting him, and every door was shut against him. All those by whom but yesterday he had been eagerly welcomed, now fled from him as if he had been infected with a plague; besides, no advocate would take charge of his cause, and no public man would consent to listen to him. At last even his servants would not continue in his service; and Paul Jones, whose exploits everyone had so recently been ready to proclaim, and whose friendship had been sought after, found himself alone in the midst of an immense population—Petersburg, a great capital, became to him a desert.

“I went to see him; he was moved even to tears by my visit. ‘I was unwilling,’ he said to me, shaking me by the hand, ‘to knock at your door, and to expose myself to a fresh affront, which would have been more cutting than all the rest. I have braved death a thousand times; now I wish for it.’ His appearance, his arms being laid upon the table, made me suspect some desperate intention. ‘I was desirous of immediately presenting a memorial about this ridiculous affair, first to the minister, and then to the Empress; but I have been interdicted from access to both of them.’ ‘Give me the paper,’ I said;

‘resume your accustomed firmness ; be comforted ; let me undertake it ; in a short time we shall meet again.’

“As soon as I had returned home, I directed some sharp and intelligent agents, who were devoted to me, to get information. When I was furnished with all the documents and attestations for which I had occasion, I hastened to show them to Paul Jones. ‘You have nothing more to fear,’ said I ; ‘the wretches are unmasked. It is only necessary to open the eyes of the Empress, and let her see how unworthily she has been deceived.’

“A letter was accordingly sent. The Empress received it, and, after having read this memorial, which was fully explanatory, and accompanied by undeniable attestations, she inveighed bitterly against the informers, revoked her rigorous orders, recalled Paul Jones to court, and received him with her usual kindness.” This, however, was an exaggeration.

The letter which he addressed to the Empress is in his own characteristic style, and dated 17th May, 1789 :

“MADAM,

“I have never served but for honour, I have never sought but glory ; and I believed I was in the way of obtaining both, when, accepting the offers made me on the part of your Majesty, I entered

your service. I was in America when M. de Simolin, through Mr. Jefferson, minister of the United States at Paris, proposed to me, in the name of your Majesty, to take the chief command of the forces in the Black Sea, which were intended to act against the Turks. I abandoned my dearest interests to accept an invitation so flattering, and I would have reached you instantly if the United States had not entrusted me with a special commission to Denmark. Of this I acquitted myself faithfully and promptly.

“At the close of the campaign I received orders to return to court, as your Majesty intended to employ me in the North Seas, and I brought with me a letter from Prince Potemkin for your Majesty, in which he mentioned my zeal and the importance of my services. I had the honour to present it, and M. le Comte de Besborodko acquainted me that a command of greater importance than that of the Black Sea, and affording full scope for the display of talent and intelligence, was intended for me. Such was my situation when, upon the mere accusation of a crime, the very idea of which wounds my delicacy, I was driven from court, deprived of the good opinion of your Majesty, and forced to employ the time which I wish to devote to the defence of your empire in clearing myself from the stains with which calumny had covered me.

“Knowing neither the laws, the language, nor

the forms of justice of this country, I needed an advocate, and obtained one ; but, whether from terror or intimidation, he stopped short all at once, and durst not undertake my defence, though convinced of the justice of my cause. But truth may always venture to show itself alone and unsupported at the foot of the throne of your Majesty. I have not hesitated to labour unaided for my own vindication. I have attested proofs ; and if such details may appear under the eyes of your Majesty, I present them ; and if your Majesty will deign to order some person to examine them, it will be seen by the report which will be made that my crime is a fiction.

“Take a soldier’s word, madam ; believe an officer whom two great nations esteem, and who has been honoured with flattering marks of their approbation (of which your Majesty will soon receive a direct proof from the United States). I am innocent ! and if I were guilty, I would not hesitate to make a candid avowal of my fault, and to commit my honour, which is a thousand times dearer to me than my life, to the hands of your Majesty.

“Nothing can ever change or efface in my heart the deep feelings of devotedness with which your Majesty has inspired me.

“To you, madam, I am personally devoted. I would rather have my head struck off than see those ties broken asunder which bind me to your service.

At the feet of your Majesty I swear to be ever faithful to you, as well as to the empire, of which you form the happiness, the ornament, and the glory.

“I am, with the most profound respect, Madam,”
etc. etc.

But he had to return to Paris without being restored to favour. It was, no doubt, the disgrace of a criminal charge that had affected his reputation. We find him henceforth applying vainly to this court and that, proposing schemes more or less Utopian, and above all pressing claims of arrears for services. This is invariably a part of the adventurer's *rôle*. No one would have anything to do with him. He also seems to have totally given up the sea. The truth was, the hardships, anxieties, and, perhaps, disappointments of his past life were beginning to tell upon him. He was, in fact, disgraced.

Like many men of rough and desperate natures, he was, in his family relations, warmly affectionate, and even romantic. It is surprising to find this bold buccaneer writing thus to his sisters away in Scotland :

“I shall not conceal from you that your family discord aggravates infinitely all my pains. My grief is inexpressible that two sisters, whose happiness is so interesting to me, do not live together in that *mutual tenderness and affection* which would do so

much honour to themselves and to the memory of their worthy relations. Permit me to recommend to your serious *study* and *application* Pope's "Universal Prayer." You will find more morality in that little piece than in many volumes that have been written by great divines :

Teach me to *feel* another's woe,
 To *hide* the fault I see ;
 That mercy I to others show,
Such mercy show to me !

"This is not the language of a weak, superstitious mind, but the spontaneous offspring of true religion, springing from a heart sincerely inspired by *charity*, and deeply impressed with a sense of the calamities and *frailties* of human nature. If the sphere in which Providence has placed us as members of society requires the exercise of brotherly kindness and charity towards our neighbour in general, how much more is this our duty with respect to individuals with whom we are connected by the *near* and *tender* ties of nature as well as moral obligation ! Every lesser virtue may pass away, but *charity* comes from Heaven, and is immortal. Though I wish to be the instrument of making family peace, which I flatter myself would tend to promote the happiness of you all, yet I by no means desire you to do violence to your own feelings, by taking any step that is contrary to your own judgment and inclina-

tion. Your reconciliation must come free from your heart, otherwise it will not last, and therefore it will be better not to attempt it. Should a reconciliation take place, I recommend it of all things, that you never mention past grievances, nor show, by *word*, *look*, or *action*, that you have not forgot them."

His health now began rapidly to fail, and in 1792 he succumbed to an attack of jaundice.

"Your brother, Admiral Jones," writes Colonel Blackden to the Scotch sisters, "was not in good health for about a year, but had not been so unwell as to keep house. For two months past he began to lose his appetite, to grow yellow, and show signs of the jaundice ; for this he took medicine, and seemed to grow better ; but about ten days before his death his legs began to swell, which increased upwards, so that two days before his exit he could not button his waistcoat, and had great difficulty of breathing.

"I visited him every day, and, beginning to be apprehensive of his danger, desired him to settle his affairs ; but this he put off till the afternoon of his death, when he was prevailed on to send for a *notaire*, and made his will. Mr. Beaupoil and myself witnessed it at about eight o'clock in the evening, and left him sitting in a chair. A few minutes after we retired he walked into his chamber and laid himself upon his face on the bedside, with his feet on the floor. After the Queen's physician arrived they

went into the room and found him in that position, and, upon taking him up, they found he had expired.

“His disorder had terminated in dropsy of the breast. His body was put into a leaden coffin on the twentieth, that in case the United States, whom he had so essentially served, and with so much honour to himself, should claim his remains, they might be more easily removed. This is all, madam, I can say concerning his illness and death.”

The American Government, however, did not care to claim the remains of the poor buccaneer, so they were left in Paris. The National Assembly sent a deputation to attend his funeral. He had but little to bequeath, six or seven thousand dollars in cash, but a vast number of claims, unsatisfied, and not likely to be satisfied.

BECKFORD AND FONTHILL ABBEY.

BECKFORD AND FONTHILL ABBEY.

THE story of Beckford, the millionaire, interesting in itself, is, however, more significant as an illustration of how the arrogance and selfishness of unbounded wealth brings with it a sure and unfailing chastisement. In our time, whether from the force of public opinion, or the more general diffusion of moderation and sound sense, the possessor of "wealth beyond the dreams of avarice," behaves pretty much as the other less fortunate of his fellow-creatures, and even assumes a kind of modest bearing. It is conceded, that of all social inconveniences, the vulgar arrogance of wealth and its display is the most odious.

Yet Beckford was a man of extraordinary gifts. He was the author of a brilliant tale, "Vathek," which made a prodigious sensation in its day, while his travels cannot be approached for their elegant picturesqueness and charming vivacity of style. They

might be placed above "Eothen," having even more variety and gaiety than that much-praised book. His work on hunting is not yet forgotten. He was moreover, deeply read in old and curious literature, and was besides a virtuoso of the first water. And yet, odd contradiction! this cultivated and refined being was not above the vulgarity of seeking to awe and dazzle the community by theatrical and Eastern magnificence, or of exciting the curiosity of the crowd, by enclosing himself and his castle within a vast wall eight miles long, inside which sacred precinct, jealously guarded, few were allowed to enter save under the most jealous precautions.

His father was the well-known Alderman and Lord Mayor Beckford, on whose monument in the Guildhall is recorded a nobly defiant speech addressed to King George III., and which it is well ascertained was never uttered. He left his son estates and vast sums of money which, by a nine years' minority, fructified enormously.

When he was a youth of seventeen he gave evidence of a pleasant sarcastic humour. This was in the shape of "Biographical Memoirs of Celebrated Painters," issued in 1780. He had noted with much amusement the strange narratives and descriptions of painters and pictures with which the old house-keeper used to entertain the tourists and sightseers who were taken over the castle—a weakness, too,

that is shared by most old housekeepers who fulfil that function. He conceived the amusing jest of writing down for her various imaginary details which she accepted with implicit faith, relating "how Gerard Douro devoted four or five hours to painting a broomstick," with other details as singular.

When this fortunate youth came of age he found himself in possession of minority savings amounting to nearly a million sterling, and about a hundred thousand a year! A guest who was present thus describes the festival. It took place in September, 1781 :

"On my arrival, on Wednesday last, I found the house half full of company. There had been music, dancing, and feasting from the beginning of the week. We sat down to breakfast in the great arched Grecian Hall, not less than a hundred persons, at several long tables. This being finished, a concert succeeded ; the company every moment increasing, till about five o'clock on Friday. Not less than three hundred, one-third of whom were nobility and persons of fashion, sat down to dinner ; not to mention a great addition to the numbers in the servants of the company visiting, those of the family, and their friends, who dined, some before and some afterwards, not fewer by many than those upon whom they attended. At night there was an illumination, and a brilliant ball, followed by a supper at one in the morning, at which

the guests were not fewer than they had been at dinner. The company danced, and played at cards after supper, and the festivity was kept up till daylight. Having slept a few hours, we all met again at breakfast, and that was scarcely over before the whole park, woods, and plantations, were filled with country people, flocking from the town of Hindon and the surrounding villages. By the afternoon there could not be less than ten or twelve thousand assembled. On an extensive lawn before this noble house, there were erected three long booths. In one of them dined Mr. Beckford's Wiltshire tenants, with their sons, about two hundred persons. In the other two booths were entertained, in the same manner, the people of the town of Hindon, a little borough in the neighbourhood, in Mr. Beckford's parliamentary interest. These might amount, men, women, and children, to about a thousand persons; and these, as well as the tenants, had their band of music. A great quantity of strong beer was also given away to the populace. The company in the house dined at five o'clock the second day—about as many as on the day before. Dinner being over, another grand illumination succeeded. Some thousand lamps were beautifully disposed on the lawn, in the wood, and along the river; and three great bonfires lit up on a distant ground. The company having observed and enjoyed these sights, they were, after

tea, entertained with magnificent fireworks, followed by a concert of vocal and instrumental music, in which was performed an Italian pastoral in honour of the day. There were, perhaps, more musicians of the first eminence there than ever met together at our greatest oratorios. The evening concluded with a very splendid and crowded supper. The next day, Sunday, the best part of the company that stayed, assembled in a large room, where Dr. Lettice gave them a sermon. At dinner, the company was reduced to three tables. A concert was performed in the evening, and all who were present were invited to supper. On the following morning the company began to depart, about a score of Mr. Beckford's more particular friends and relatives only continuing for some time; but the birthday celebrity was considered as finished. I feel as if I had written myself out of breath, and am glad to lay down my pen."

In his early life, when a young man, and yet unspoiled by flattery and self-indulgence, he was amiable, good-natured, and unaffected. He is described as lying for hours on his back, under the shade of his own trees, indulging in true eastern dreams—pardonable in one who was told, by all who approached him, that "he was the richest commoner in Europe." He was soon filled with the mania for building. At Fonthill, his largest estate, his father had founded a noble mansion, which he called in

the aid of a great architect to enlarge and partially rebuild. The scenes of barbaric hospitality at his coming of age, made a deep impression on him. As it was, the house and demesne might more than content the desires of a wealthy young squire. Within the grounds the visitor might walk for twenty miles without going over the same walk!

His progress on his grand tour was marked by eastern state and prodigality. He was attended by a musician, a physician, an artist, and a "literary adviser." His train, that proceeded from town to town, consisted of half-a-dozen carriages, many wag-gons carrying the luggage, and a stud of horses. At Venice and Rome all his romantic emotions were profoundly stirred; and we hear of his shedding tears when, from the heights, he first saw the Dome of St. Peter's. He flung himself on the ground in speechless rapture. Then, mounting his horse, he galloped at full speed up to the cathedral, and found that the doors were being closed. He induced the sacristan to lock him up for a couple of hours. Afterwards "he would often remain from midnight till dawn, sitting on the steps of the altar," no doubt to the astonishment of the guardians, accustomed as they were to the eccentricities of travelling Englishmen.

He had married his cousin, the Lady Margaret Gordon, but she died very soon, and he then set off

for Portugal, to distract his grief by travelling. There he dwelt in a magnificent mansion, which was the astonishment of travellers, and is sung by the poet :

And yonder towers the prince's palace fair,
There thou, too, "Vathek," England's wealthiest son,
Once formed thy paradise !

And Lord Byron added this wise reflection :

——as not aware,
When wanton wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,
Meek peace, voluptuous lures was wont to shun.

On his return, his grand idea was to erect a stupendous abbey at Fonthill, of such dimensions and magnificence as should fill the minds of all with wonder and romance. It was to realise a vision out of the Arabian Nights or a fairy tale. His whimsical idea, originally, was not to live in it himself, but to gaze on it, and construct a dwelling of the ordinary dimensions close by for his use. His brilliant eastern romance of "Vathek" was written when he was only twenty-two years old. "It cost me," he said, "three days and two nights of labour, never taking off my clothes all the time."

In many parts of the country we see strange, odd houses, towers ; plantations laid out "on the plan of the Battle of Waterloo"—a high roof, in which the remains of some former owner is deposited—and

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which are described to the inquiring stranger as "So-and-so's folly." Mr. Beckford attained to this notoriety in a conspicuous way, and left this special form of foolishness in the shape of two memorials, one at Fonthill, in Wiltshire, the other at Bath.

The Fonthill structure consisted of an enormous tower, nearly three hundred feet high, which rose from a block of buildings projecting in different directions. These contained banqueting - rooms, splendid galleries, and, above, an enormous hall, which his own Hall of Eblis, full of mystery, had suggested to him. Such things, however, if feasible in a romance or fairy tale, are difficult to realise, even with the resources of the stage. It may be said, however, that such attempts a hundred years ago, even supported by unbounded outlay, seem to us now incredibly theatrical. Witness the faded glories of the Brighton Pavilion, on which such enormous sums were lavished ; and it is surprising to find with what poor ideas the fashionable theatrical architects came provided. The visitor to Sir John Soane's Museum, in Lincoln's Inn Fields is shown what is called "The Monk's Parloir," which in its day was thought an elegant piece of illusion, the dim religious light of a cell being contrived by some yellow stained glass and other cheap devices. A lavish use of "battlements" was supposed to give the idea of a "castle." On some principles of this kind Fonthill appears to have

been designed by Wyatt, who was much in vogue at the time. Its owner intended adding "a superb chapel;" for he was greatly influenced by the more scenic adjuncts of a religious life. The various chambers were named "the Yellow Damask Room," "the Saffron Room," "the Amber Cabinet" with other fantastic denominations. While it was building he had been accumulating the richest treasures of tapestry, hangings, cabinets, and furniture of the most magnificent kind for the adornment of the interior. The whole, which was supposed to have cost a sum over a million, he declared to a friend did not exceed 273,000*l*. It is far more likely that the larger sum represents the cost.

When at Naples he had been entertained by the Hamiltons, and received from them, and also from Nelson, many civilities. When this trio were touring in England they offered to pay him a visit at Fonthill. His abbey was in the course of construction, but this strange, extravagant being determined to push on the works, so that it should be almost finished by the time of their arrival. Accordingly some seven hundred workmen were employed day and night; and under this pressure the work was so advanced as to offer a fair idea of what it would be when completed. From a particular point in the domain it was ingeniously contrived that it should actually look as if already completed, and offered to view all its turrets,

gargoyles, etc. etc. The grand hall and tower was fit for use. The latter was so lofty that it could be seen for miles. The visitors arrived, and were welcomed in the old hall, an immense wooden screen having been erected to prevent the new works being seen. They were not to see the new building except under the most romantic and effective conditions.

It was not until night drew on that they were brought to the place. Nothing could exceed the magnificence and beauty of the scene. For miles the trees were lit up with thousands of lamps ; the details of the great building itself were all marked with lights. As they entered, organs and all kinds of music pealed forth a soft welcome. Soldiers were scattered among the trees, upon whose helmets the lights flashed. The Grand Hall was thrown open for a magnificent banquet. The eye was dazzled by gold and silver plate, while round the room wax candles, each *six feet* long, were fixed in silver sconces of suitable size. Then the guests were ushered up the grand staircase, lined with hooded *monks* bearing torches. Then were displayed his magnificent rooms, with his rich furniture and precious cabinets, hangings of crimson velvet embroidered in gold. They next passed to the oratory, where a lamp of gold showed them a statue of St. Anthony, in a niche studded with jewels and mosaics. There were ebony candelabra, and organ music.

In the library, chairs were arranged in the yellow damask room to receive the company. A clear space was left in front of the seats. "When the company had returned to that room and taken seats, Lady Hamilton entered, attired in the character of Agrippina, carrying in a golden urn the ashes of Germanicus, in order to excite the Roman people to avenge the death of her husband, who had fallen a victim to the envy of Tiberius, poisoned, as it was supposed, by that emperor's order. She displayed the attitudes of a Roman lady: the grief she was supposed to feel, and that nobility of feature directed to express sorrow, which belongs only to good acting; and here she was, as she had been through life, an adept. She threw into her character everything in passion, or solicitation, which could move the Roman people to uphold her cause, and that of their favourite leader. She altered her head-dress to suit the different changes of situation in which she presented herself in succession, with so much ease and adroitness, without retiring or turning aside a moment from the spectators, that she merited the praise of extreme cleverness. In the last scene of her pantomime—for pantomime it was—she took a young lady from the company to personate her daughter. Here, too, her action was so correct and natural, that she drew tears from some of the company."

Finally, on their departure, spiced wines in flagons

of ruby glass, carafes of rose-water, and cases of attar of roses brought from Shiraz, were handed round. Such was this magnificent, if not absurd, display, which, however, was talked of and magnified, and added to his reputation.

The extravagances he displayed during the progress of the building argue either the vulgar arrogance of the rich *parvenu*, or something akin to insanity.

“ A vast number of mechanics and labourers were employed to advance the works with rapidity, and a new hamlet was built to accommodate the workmen. All round was activity and energy, whilst the growing edifice, as the scaffolding and walls were raised above the surrounding trees, excited the curiosity of the passing tourist, as well as the villagers. It appears that Mr. Beckford pursued the objects of his wishes, whatever they were, not coolly and considerately like most other men, but with all the enthusiasm of passion. No sooner did he decide upon any point than he had it carried into immediate execution, whatever might be the cost. After the building was commenced, he was so impatient to get it furnished, that he kept regular relays of men at work night and day, including Sundays, supplying them liberally with ale and spirits while they were at work ; and when anything was completed which gave him particular pleasure, adding an extra 5*l.* or 10*l.* to be spent in drink. The first tower, the height of which from the

ground was 400 feet, was built of wood, in order to see its effect ; this was then taken down, and the same form put up in wood covered with cement. This fell down, and the tower was built a third time on the same foundation with brick and stone. The foundation of the tower was originally that of a small summer-house, to which Mr. Beckford was making additions, when the idea of the Abbey occurred to him ; and this idea he was so impatient to realise, that he would not wait to remove the summer-house to make a proper foundation for the tower, but carried it up on the walls already standing, and this with the worst description of materials and workmanship, while it was mostly built by men in a state of intoxication.

“ While the tower was building,” we are told, “ an elevated part of it caught fire and was destroyed ; the sight was sublime, and was enjoyed by Mr. Beckford. This was soon rebuilt. At one period, every cart and waggon in the district were pressed into the service ; at another, the works at St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, were abandoned that 400 men might be employed night and day on Fonthill Abbey. These men relieved each other by regular watches, and during the longest and darkest nights of winter it was a strange sight to see the tower rising under their hands, the trowel and the torch being associated for that purpose. This Mr. Beckford was fond of contemplating. He is represented as surveying from an eminence the works thus

expedited, the busy bevy of the masons, the dancing lights and their strange effects upon the wood and architecture below, and feasting his sense with this display of almost superhuman exertion.

“He had sworn by St. Anthony that he would have his Christmas dinner cooked in the new Abbey kitchen. The time was short, and much remained to be done. Every exertion that money could command was brought to bear. The apartment, indeed, was finished by the Christmas morning, but the bricks had not time to settle readily into their places, the beams were not thoroughly secured, the mortar, which was to keep the walls together, had not dried. The fire was lit, the repast was cooked, the servants were carrying the dishes through the long passages into the dining-room, when the kitchen itself fell in with a loud crash ; but no person was injured.

“When he wished a new walk to be cut in the woods, or work of any kind to be done, he used merely to give orders, perhaps late in the afternoon, that it should be cleared out and in a perfect state by the following morning at the time he came out to take his ride. The whole strength of the village was then put upon the work, and employed during the night and next day, when Mr. Beckford came to inspect what was done ; if he was pleased with it he used to give a 5*l.* or 10*l.* note to the men who had

been employed to drink, besides, of course, paying their wages, which were always liberal. His charities were performed in the same capricious manner. Suddenly he would order a hundred pairs of blankets to be purchased and given away ; or all the firs to be cut out of an extensive plantation, and all the poor who chose to take them away were permitted to do so, provided it were done in one night. He was also known to suddenly order all the waggons and carts that could be procured to be sent off for coal to be distributed among the poor.

“In the case of the poor he would sometimes throw a one-pound note or a guinea to them ; or he would turn round and give the supplicants a severe horse-whipping. In the last case he generally sent back a guinea or two to the persons whom he had whipped. His table was laid every day in the most splendid style. He was known to give orders for a dinner for twelve persons, and to sit down alone to it, attended by twelve servants in full-dress ; yet he would eat only of one dish and send the rest away. There were no bells at Fonthill, with the exception of one room, occupied occasionally by Mr. Beckford’s daughter, the Duchess of Hamilton. The servants used to wait by turns in the anterooms to the apartments which Mr. Beckford occupied.”

When the building was completed, and he had taken up his residence there, he found a new pleasure in mys-

tifying the world by a constant seclusion. No one was admitted. His life was enshrouded in gloom and secrecy. This naturally piqued curiosity, and the strangest, wildest legends were circulated about him.

Once an adventurous gentleman climbed over the wall, but was unluckily surprised in the grounds by the proprietor himself. To his astonishment Mr. Beckford received him courteously, showed him all that was to be seen, and entertained him sumptuously. The story went that when night set in, and the hour of departure arrived, the visitor was carried to the spot where he had been met, and was then left to find his way out if he could. The owner, however, denied this, and said he had treated the visitor with perfect courtesy, and at his own request had him taken to the gate.

A more characteristic instance was the invasion of the eccentric Duchess of Gordon, who had marked him as an excellent match for one of her daughters. She contrived to invite herself to Fonthill, where she arrived in due course with the young lady destined for her host. She was received and entertained with a magnificent hospitality. But the first day passed without the host showing himself, the second day went by in the same way, and in spite of all her persevering efforts, the enterprising lady and her daughter had to depart without ever having seen the person she came to see, a repulse much enjoyed by the public.

He was fond of little childish devices to increase the awe and astonishment of the visitor. For instance, he employed his dwarf servant to open the doors of the great hall, which were nearly thirty feet high, thus offering a grotesque contrast. All the trees were crowded together, their branches tangled overhead, so as to conceal the Abbey till the proper moment, when of a sudden it broke on the spectator. The windows were filled with stained glass full of fanciful pedigrees, showing his descent from John of Gaunt and other illustrious ancestors.

But presently adversity was to overtake this opulent seigneur. He possessed large estates in the West Indies, his title to which was contested. This question was finally decided against him, and he lost two rich estates, with 1500 slaves on them, by a decree of the Court of Chancery. He now appeared to be ruined. No doubt his unceasing extravagance affected his fortunes. He determined to sell the Abbey, in which he had lived for more than twenty years, with all its magnificent contents. In 1822 the place was opened for exhibition to sightseers and intending purchasers, at the high charge of a guinea for admission, under the direction of Mr. Christie, of the well-known firm, who was to "submit the whole to public competition;" but a private purchaser intervened, Mr. Farquhar, who took the whole in one lot, it was said, at 350,000*l*. This successor was an enormously

wealthy old miser, who, however, was not destined to have much enjoyment out of his purchase. Two or three years after he had left, Mr. Beckford was sent for to the death-bed of a workman, who said he had something on his mind that concerned him. This was a revelation to the effect that a dreadful deceit had been played on him as to the great tower. The vast mass required vast foundations, and a huge arch "turned" underground to give it support. This had been scamped by the architect or builder, and at any moment the whole might give way. Mr. Beckford received this news philosophically, but sent word to the new tenant, who received it as easily, and took no precautions. What he had been warned about came to pass very soon, viz., in 1825. Mr. Farquhar and his family had fortunately taken up their abode in one of the wings. Mr. Loudon was at Fonthill some ten years later, and heard all the particulars of the catastrophe from the neighbours.

"He was wheeled out in his chair on the front lawn about half-an-hour before the tower fell; and though he had seen the cracks and the deviation of the centre from the perpendicular, he treated the idea of its coming down as ridiculous. He was carried back to his room, and the tower fell almost immediately. Neither Mr. Farquhar, nor the servants who were in the kitchen preparing dinner,

knew that it had fallen, though the immense collection of dust which rose into the atmosphere had assembled almost all the inhabitants of the village, and had given the alarm even as far as Lord Arundell's seat, Wardour Castle. Only one man (who died in 1833) saw the tower fall; it first sank perpendicularly and slowly, and then burst and spread over the roofs of the adjoining wings on every side. The cloud of dust was enormous, so as completely to darken the air for a considerable distance around for several minutes. Such was the concussion in the interior of the building, that one man was forced along a passage as if he had been in an air-gun, to the distance of thirty feet, among dust so thick as to be felt. Another person, on the outside, was, in like manner, carried to some distance; fortunately, no one was seriously injured. Mr. Farquhar, it is said, could scarcely be convinced that the tower was down, and when he was so, he said he was glad of it, for that now the house was not too large for him to live in.

Having now moved to Bath, the same mania for building pursued him, and he proceeded to erect a tower at Lansdown. With his fortune much impaired, but in possession of wealth, he accepted the new condition of things cheerfully. He was seen riding about the streets of that palatial town, attended by a dwarf, whom he had adopted on his

travels. He had laid out some of his Fonthill money in the purchase of annuities, and he recommenced afresh the pleasant life of the virtuoso collector.

His taste in pictures and *virtù*, in which there was but little knowledge or taste at that period, was truly remarkable, and was amply proved by the difference between the prices he paid, and what he later received. Rafaëlle's St. Catherine was sold to the National Gallery for 6000 guineas, and it cost him but 300. For the Madonna of Pietro Perugino he only paid 50 guineas, and received 800 from the national collection.

There are many of his letters preserved, together with notes of conversations, notably with Mr. Cyrus Redding, whom he admitted to his intimacy in the closing years of his life. But the most characteristic of these writings are his directions to his agents for securing him any art treasures that were to be sent to auction. These also breathe the spirit of the ardent collector, and are so enthusiastic, not to say odd, that they are worth quoting.

"The Claudes are not vanity *morceaux*, but highly instructive and interesting to me, so I am quite satisfied. Had I been at your elbow, Sir — should not have carried off the *musée* drawing. The Fries volumes may boast of all your *very fine* Vandyck

rarities, with the addition of the *original* etching of Titian and his Bonaroba.

“Fine impressions of the ovals are so desirable to me in particular, that I cannot help regretting them, even at the high price they fetched. I have an incomplete set of 22 ; to make up the 24 I added two *de ma façon*, not copies but imitations, so much in the spirit of Swaneveldt, that when you see them you will be induced to believe them by his own hand. This sounds strange and presumptuous, but it is not, though a little presumptuous or so, more strange than true. (The Lagunes) should be secured for me most positively; 511 (the Parrot) ditto, ditto; 540 ditto, ditto; 564, being genuine, I must also have. The Elsheimers have turned out what I expected. I will not conclude without authorising you to secure all the lots above mentioned upon the best terms you are able ; and again express my grateful sense of the minute attention paid my rather long-winded and tiresome communications.

“You will find me all agog, all ardour, all intrepidity.

“The S. Hill wonderment is so much upon the decline, having been written down by the *Times* and other papers most vigorously, that I should not be surprised if good bargains were to be met with on the day of trial.

“No doubt you have scrutinously gone through

and through all the portfolios ; your observations would be highly acceptable.

“ 6th day, 46.—I hope the little Callot will not turn out *populous* ; but even if it does, it must not escape me—pray take good care of that. Remember to put aside for me an architectural drawing by Perino del Vaga, with statues in niches ; think of me when any drawings of this kind turn up. I have some already of this class, very fine. 8th day.—A folio of prints, etc., from the antique, in the Cabinet de Girardon, I must have. The impressions are good, particularly the portrait—it is scarce—miss it not. If you have leisure to delve deep into the round tower ruin, many and many interesting odds and ends (in my way) may be picked up.

“ Though I regret the Callots, I have not a word to say against your having dropped them (probably in the nick of time) upon another mirror of impudence, the eternal T.

“ I wonder how long the rod intended for our shoulders is to remain in pickle—when will soaking and vamping be completed ?

“ Should the Dog star and Duke star continue to rage, and the hornets follow us from the S. Hill round-house to the metropolitan scene of auction with freshly-pointed stings and renewed virulence, inflammation must ensue, as it did that miserable day when the Callots I had so right entirely set my whole heart

upon, were ravished away from me, to my utter surprise and infinite annoyance.

“Have you discovered yet into whose hands they have really fallen? I shall never cease regretting them most bitterly—never!—never!—50 or 60 guineas are more easily found than such genuine mellow impressions as were contained in the little greasy bit of a second volume, or such truly original sketches as rendered the first one of the daintiest morsels that ever excited my appetite.

“I dread the impending Robins-ism. God knows how we shall fare; but I keep up my spirits as well as I can.

“When you see the Lansdown Hollars (which I sincerely hope you will, one day or other), you will be convinced, I think, my dear sir, that the S. are a little too black and brilliant.

“I grow more and more nervous every hour, when I reflect upon the ferocious mad bull tossings we may expect at the next Strawberry conflict.

“My vocation for Papes and Elstrackes is not sufficiently fervent to conquer the disgust, the nausea, the abhorrence with which the last S. H. proceedings have inspired me. The fine portraits specified in your choice little list are absolutely beyond my reach, nor shall I stand on tiptoe to reach them.”

His wonderful library, in which he delighted, was only lately sold, and excited a piquant curiosity, from

the odd comments and original notes with which he enlivened his reading. These are of a sarcastic and bitter kind ; but the books themselves show he was a man of great taste and profound knowledge of the mysteries of bibliomania. His marginal notes are really pleasant and piquant, and the visitors to Christies', at the recent sale of his fine library, found much entertainment in a hasty perusal. Witness his peculiarities in a "Collins's Noble Families," on "Holles :"

"52. 'Holish, Holes, Holeys, Hollis, Holles, and Hollys, all one and the same name.'

" 'This nameful family, ingeniously acknowledged to have run under the ground in obscurity (like the river Arethusa), till, by God's blessing, Sir William Holles, knight and alderman, raised it to wealth and honour.

"54. 'A most candid gentleman of the family, nearly related to the first Earl of Clare, protests he would not scrape a chimney-sweeper out of his pedigree to foist in a prince ; therefore, in order to proceed with good authority in his memoirs, goes no higher than the father of the first Sir William Holles, whom the Guildhall Register plainly declares to be Sir Wm. Holeys, of Stoke Com. War., yeoman.

"56. 'Much about the glories and prerogatives of Lord Mayorism—achievements of Sir Wm. Holles or Holeys whilst in office. In his mayoralty he caused

the Moor ditch, and all those ditches which annoyed the city, to be scoured—a grand and perilous operation, for, as Stowe observes, they were never scoured but once more.’”

His taste for burlesque was strong, and he was very successful in writing humorous novels in the style of Mr. Burnand or the late Mr. Thackeray, satirising the story-tellers of the day. Some of them are in a pleasant vein, particularly the sketch of a hero. Henry Lambert, who had “already fought in three campaigns, encountered a storm at sea, and broke his collar-bone when hunting. His hazards of suffering required every religious consideration to sustain on the part of the gentle Arabella. She lived in a house in a forest so much out of repair, that the distant bells from the village had a peculiar pathos, when the benighted traveller reposed himself in the hawthorn grove. This could not be prevented by the usual operation of foresight; nor did the howling of the yard-dog during the tempest in any manner decrease the general perturbation. Lady Maria, indeed, who slept in the attic story, first caught the alarm, and rushing through the flames, descended by a back staircase into the garden. The clock struck one at the moment, and the awful solemnity of the scene was horribly impressive. Yet but a little before she might have collected herself with propriety, even though the danger had been ten times more imminent;

for in all active emergency, nature is prone to subside and yield the palm to the consistency of power. The expected visitors not coming the next day, rendered the situation of Lady Maria still more perplexing, because she had promised the duchess and Miss Pebley to meet them in the rooms that evening."

To the end of his life—and he lived to a very advanced age—he was full of energy, and used to declare that "he never had a moment's *ennui* in his life." This, however, may be doubted. He was certainly one of the most accomplished and clever men of his day. Besides being thoroughly versed in the classical tongues, he could speak all the modern tongues fluently, and, besides, wrote in three languages like a native. His tale of "Vathek" was originally written in French. He knew Russian and Arabic. He was a musician, and enjoyed the good fortune of having Mozart for his master. In this course of life he spent many years. His figure was familiar enough in Bath, as he rode about, though he often repaired to London, where he had several town houses. He was said to be charitable, though in his charity there was a certain capriciousness and oddity. Thus we find it gravely reported that on meeting a poor cripple he paused, surveyed him, rode away, returned and surveyed him, then gave him some money, with the remark, "Well, you *are* an object of charity."

In May, 1844, at the age of eighty-four, this curious being departed from the world, which he had failed to impress as he wished, leaving his towers and his other follies to be objects of speculation or of pitying contempt for the late owner. One of his daughters was married to the Duke of Hamilton ; the other, having made a "poor match," he never would see again.

Such was the history of Beckford of Fonthill

IRELAND AND THE SHAKESPEARE FORGERIES.

IRELAND AND THE SHAKESPEARE FORGERIES.

THE fate of Chatterton, "the marvellous boy," has always had a romantic interest, and the details of his career are familiar. Not so well known is the story of Ireland, the Shakespeare fabricator, which offers no romance whatever; but it is curious, as showing to what lengths of imposture the passion for musty volumes and antiquarian renown will lead men into. The annals of bibliomania show many instances of this devouring passion, even to the placing its victim within reach of the law. The story of the Ireland forgery sets this in a more curious light, as the imposture was attempted, not for vulgar gain, but from pure antiquarian vanity and enthusiasm.

William Henry Ireland was the son of one Samuel Ireland, a well-known laborious collector, "snapper-up of trifles," illustrator of books on

scenery, "Tours," etc.—a form of literature which was then in high fashion—to say nothing of his having made Hogarth his special hobby, having collected all that could throw light upon the artist's life and works, and such, it was insinuated, with which the artist had no concern. His father and himself appear to have been filled with a strange and ceaseless delusion or craving, that relics might turn up of "immortal Shakespeare," or of some other great writer; and the boy's feeling was particularly kindled by a visit to Stratford-on-Avon and to the neighbouring towns, notably Shottery, where the bard married Anne Hathaway.

"After making a drawing of the premises, Mr. S. Ireland conversed for a considerable length of time with its then possessors; from whom he purchased a *bugle purse, said to have been a present from our great poet to the object of his choice*; as also an old oak chair, wherein it was stated our bard was used to sit, during his courtship, with his Anne upon his knee. The Shakespearian chair, which had a place in Mr. Ireland's study on being conveyed to London, was perfectly well known to all the inspectors of the manuscripts; many of whom I have often seen seated therein to hear the perusal of the papers; and *their settled physiognomies have frequently excited in me a desire for laughter which it has required every effort on my part to restrain.*"

This sort of relic-furnishing thus seems to have been a kind of lucrative calling, easily and profitably pursued, owing to what might be called the "gullibility of the *cognoscenti*." In this spirit the young fellow, who was being articled to a solicitor, went about, occasionally picking up rare tracts and pamphlets, and astonishing his enthusiastic father by his successes in this line. He thus describes the first occasion when the tempter or demon presented himself. "I happened," he says, "to purchase a small quarto tract, written by a gentleman of Lincoln's Inn, and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. It contained a set of prayers, and was adorned round the margin of each page with a very spirited wood-cut border. These borders were carefully emblazoned, and the tract bound in vellum, with Elizabeth's arms stamped in gold on the cover, together with various other ornaments.

"As the work was dedicated to the Queen, and as from the appearance of the internal emblazoning, covers, etc., it had very probably once belonged to the library of that Queen, I determined on endeavouring to establish it as the presentation copy from the author, whose name has now altogether escaped my recollection. In order to compass this I weakened some common ink with water; and on a piece of old paper wrote a dedicatory epistle, as if from the author to Elizabeth, requesting her gracious acceptance and

countenance of his work. This letter I thrust between the vellum cover and the paper, which had originally stuck to it but had then given way."

He then presented it to his father, who was greatly gratified. What he really hankered after was Shakespeare, often protesting that he would give half his library for a single signature. His son, then a mere lad, who seems to have been attached to his father, tried him next with a plaster bust of Cromwell, the work of a young apprentice whom he knew, which he marked on the back as the gift of the great man to his friend Bradshaw. This bait was so greedily snapped at by the collectors who visited his father's shop—being set down to Simon, a contemporary sculptor of the Commonwealth—while the father continued his longings for a "bit of Shakespeare," that the young fellow was tempted to go on. He was prompted by vanity too—*i.e.* the consciousness of the success of his own ingenious powers, though there might be no one to give him credit for them.

He accordingly made a tracing of the bard's signature, and read over a mortgage-deed printed in one of the collections. He then proceeded to his chambers, furnished with a bottle of tawny-coloured ink, made for him by a bookseller's man, and set to work on his task.

"Having cut off a piece of parchment from the end of an old rent-roll at chambers, I placed a deed

before me of the period of James I., and then proceeded to imitate the style of the penmanship as well as possible, forming a lease as between William Shakespeare and John Heminge with one Michael Fraser and Elizabeth his wife, whereto I affixed the signature of Shakespeare, keeping the transcript of his original autographs before me ; while the superscription of Michael Fraser was executed with my left hand, in order the better to conceal it as being from the same pen.

“ The contents of the lease being finished, and the signatures subscribed, I found much difficulty in annexing the seals, which, at the period of James I. were not similar to those of the present day, being formed of malleable wax, and stamped upon narrow pieces of parchment hanging from the deed directly under the signatures. Having affixed the strips of parchment according to the method adopted in the reign of James, I in the first instance endeavoured to heat in a shovel the wax of some old seals which I had cut from the deeds ; but this proved impracticable, as the wax, from age, having lost its moisture in a great degree, instead of melting rather crumbled over the heat. At length I adopted the expedient of heating a knife, with which I cut an old seal in two without its cracking ; and having with a penknife carefully scooped a cavity on the opposite side to that bearing the impression, I therein placed

the strip of parchment pendant from the deed, and having heated some wax of a less ancient date, I placed it, when hot, within the remaining part of the cavity, and thus formed a back to the seal; but as the fore and hind part of the seal, on account of the different ages of the wax, varied in colour, I again moistened the seal before the fire, and in that state rubbed soot and coal-ashes over it, which thereby became incorporated with the seal, and in great measure screened the colour from observation.

“Having with much labour and contrivance accomplished the two seals, I determined on presenting this first specimen to Mr. S. Ireland.

“It was about eight o'clock, being after my evening's attendance at chambers, that I presented the deed in question. Mr. S. Ireland's family were present, and, if I mistake not, another person, the fact being precisely as follows: I had placed the deed within my bosom, when, after informing Mr. Ireland that I had a very great curiosity to show him, I drew it forth and presented it, saying: 'There, sir! what do you think of that?' Mr. Ireland, opening the parchment, regarded it for a length of time with the strictest scrutiny; he then examined the seals, and afterwards proceeded to fold up the instrument; and on presenting it to me he replied: 'I certainly believe it to be a genuine deed of the time.' Returning it immediately into Mr. Ireland's hand, I then

made answer: 'If you think it so, I beg your acceptance of it.' Mr. Ireland, immediately taking the keys of his library from his pocket, presented them to me, saying: 'It is impossible for me to express the pleasure you have given me by the presentation of this deed. There are the keys of my bookcase; go and take from it whatsoever you please; I shall refuse you nothing.

"The morning after my presentation of the lease, the first person sent to by Mr. Samuel Ireland was Sir Fr*d*r**k Ed*n, who, after a very strict examination of the deed, gave it as his decided opinion that the instrument was valid; and on looking at the impressions on the seals, that under the signature of Shakespeare he affirmed was a representation of a machine called the quintin. As this amusement seemed to bear so great an analogy to the name *Shake-spear* it was immediately conjectured that the seal must have belonged to our bard; and from that moment the quintin was gravely affirmed to be the seal always used by our monarch of the drama.

"I shall merely state that on cutting the seal in question from an old deed in chambers I never even looked at the impression; and, if such had been the case, I should not have known that the stamp on the wax represented the quintin—a machine of which I had never heard until after the delivery of the deed as before stated."

Numbers of these connoisseurs flocked to the house to see the new curiosity, and great inconvenient eagerness was shown to know how it had been discovered. Much pressed and stimulated, the young man was driven to proceed in the course he had set out upon. He next produced Shakespeare's "Confession of Faith," a really surprising performance.

"I beynge," it ran, "nowe offe sounde Mynde doe hope thatte thys mye wyshe wille atte mye deathe bee acceded toe as I nowe lyve in Londonne ande as mye soule maye perchance soone quitte thys poore Bodye it is mye desire thatte inne suche case I maye bee carryed toe mye native place ande thatte mye Bodye bee there quietlye interred wythe as little pompe as canne bee, and I doe nowe inne these mye seyriouse moments make thys mye professione of fayth and which I doe moste solemnlye believe I doe fyrste looke toe oun lovyng and greate God and toe hys gloriouse sonne Jesus I doe alsoe beleyve thatte thys mye weake ande frayle Bodye wille retturne toe duste butte forre mye soule lette God judge thatte as toe hymselfe shalle seeme meete O omnipotente and greate God I am full offe Synne I doe notte thynke myselfe worthye offe thye grace ande yette wille I hope forre evene the poore prysonerre whenne bounde with gallyng Irons evenne hee wille hope for Pittye ande whenne the teares offe sweete repentance bathe hys wretched pillowe he then looks ande hopes forre pardonne."

When this was read aloud to Dr. Parr and Dr. Warton, these two worthies listened in silence. The fabricator waited in trepidation for their verdict, when the doctor declared :

“Sir, we have very fine passages in our Church service, and our Litany abounds with beauties ; but here, sir, here is a man who has distanced us all !”

“When I heard these words pronounced,” says young Mr. Ireland, “I could scarcely credit my own senses ; and such was the effect they produced upon me, that I knew not whether to smile or not.”

The crowd of interested antiquaries and others, who now crowded into Mr. Ireland’s shop to gaze on his curiosities, naturally became eager to learn the circumstances under which so remarkable a discovery had been made. Some sort of story had to be devised, and it took the shape of “an acquaintance made at a coffee-house with a gentleman of fortune who requested that I would pay him a visit ; stating at the same time that he had many old papers, which had descended to him from his ancestors, who had practised the law, among which some might in all probability be found worthy my notice, in which case he would willingly make me a present of them. Happening, some mornings after, to pass near his chambers, the circumstance came to my recollection, and I in consequence determined on paying my friend a visit. I then observed that on my entrance into the apartment the gentle-

man appeared rather hurt at my remissness in not having kept my appointment with him ; when, after a suitable apology, he desired me to go into an adjoining apartment, where I observed a vast collection of old deeds and papers tied up in bundles and numbered, which I instantly began to inspect, when, after having looked over some parcels, I discovered, to my utter astonishment, the deed between our bard and Michael Fraser, bearing the signature of Shakespeare. I then proceeded to state, that, my first surprise having subsided, I took the above-mentioned deed to my friend, who also appeared much astonished, not conceiving any such document had been in his possession ; that he remarked it was certainly a very curious instrument, but that having promised me everything I should find worthy my notice, he would not be worse than his word, and, desiring only that I would make him a fair transcript in my own handwriting, he told me the deed was at my service."

As the eager and enthusiastic antiquaries discussed the new-found treasures, they threw out speculations as to other names and papers which might to a certainty be found among the treasures ; and these hints the fabricator turned to profit, producing the papers almost to order. In this way was suggested letters from Queen Elizabeth to the bard ; from Lord Southampton to the same ; verses to Anne Hathaway, sent with a lock of his hair.

“Having purchased of one Yardley, a vendor of old parchments in Clare Market, some patents of the reigns of Henry VIII., Mary, and Elizabeth, with the great seals of England pendant thereto (being affixed to the parchment with thick woven silk, as was usually the custom at those periods, and being about four inches in length), the idea struck me that the use of one of the pieces of woven silk in question would give an imposing air of genuineness to the lock of hair. After putting this expedient into effect I wrote the letter to Anne Hathaway, wherein I laid great stress on the workmanship of the silk, as if executed by the hand of Shakespeare. The words ran as follow :

“ ‘ I doe assure thee no rude hande hathe knottedde itte, thye Willys alone hathe done the worke neytherre the gyldedde bauble thatte envyronnes the heade of Magestye noe norre honourres moste weyghtye woude give mee halfe the joye as didde thysse mye lyttle worke forre thee,’ etc. etc.

“ I must confess that when I call to my recollection the numerous persons who inspected the papers, and of course the lock of hair with its silken appendage, and who were in the daily habit of inspecting grants, charters, patents, etc., most of them having a similar twist in order to affix the great seal to the parchments, I am much astonished that the silk in question should have never been remarked by anyone frequenting Mr. Ireland’s house. Small quantities of the hair being

carefully taken from the original lock, were distributed into several rings; but I shall refrain from making mention of their wearers; it is sufficient for me that they were believers in the authenticity of the manuscripts."

This ingenious and ready being was prepared at all points, as will be seen from the following, which was another of his devices :

"As old papers containing trivial accounts are usually bound together, it was deemed extraordinary that the numerous playhouse receipts, which were written on small slips of paper, should be brought forward without being tied up. I was for some time anxious to obviate this objection, yet dreaded a discovery, by producing a thread or string of the present day.

"As Mr. S. Ireland very frequently made it a point to go to the House of Lords in order to hear his Majesty's speech and be present when he was robed, I happened to be in company with him on one of these occasions. I observed that the walls of the chambers were hung with very old and mutilated tapestry, when the idea suddenly struck me, that, by procuring a small remnant (knowing its antiquity), I might unravel the worsted. I took up a loose piece (being about half the size of my hand), which was worn by time, from the hangings of an apartment; and on returning to my Shakespearian occupation I drew out

the worsted thread, which afterwards served me whenever I had occasion to attach any of the receipts or other papers together."

The antiquaries being still insatiable, the youth was driven to produce a copy of one of the plays, "King Lear," from which he adroitly omitted many of those "buffooning" or ribaldrous passages which have intrigued commentators. This was at once seized on as a fresh proof of authenticity; for how improbable, it was speculated, that the divine William should have been responsible for such unaccountable, undignified stuff! Next a play, "Vortigern," was produced at the leading theatre. The folly of the proceeding and the "gullibility" of the public seem incredible. Nowadays it might be said that if ever a genuine piece of Shakespeare were discovered and announced for performance, the idea would be received with incredulity and derision.

At Drury Lane the crush was tremendous. Kemble took the leading part, and, with a sort of disloyalty, which was not uncommon with him when he disliked a part, went mechanically through the play in a chilling, solemn style. But the crisis was reached when he came to these lines :

And make me, too, a subject like themselves.
Subject!—to whom?—to thee, O sov'reign Death!
Who hast for thy domain this world immense.

Churchyards and charnel-houses are thy haunts,
And hospitals thy sumptuous palaces.
And when thou wouldst be merry, thou dost choose
The gaudy chamber of a dying king.
Oh then thou dost ope wide thy hideous jaws,
And with rude laughter and fantastic tricks
Thou clapp'st thy rattling fingers to thy sides.
And when this solemn mockery is o'er,
With icy hand thou tak'st him by the feet,
And upward, so, till thou dost reach the heart,
And wrap him in a cloak of 'lasting night.

“No sooner was the above line uttered, in the most sepulchral tone of voice possible, and accompanied with that peculiar emphasis which on a subsequent occasion so justly rendered Mr. Kemble the object of criticism (viz. on the first representation of Mr. Colman's ‘Iron Chest’), than the most discordant howl echoed from the pit that ever assailed the organs of hearing. After the lapse of ten minutes the clamour subsided; when Mr. Kemble, having again obtained a hearing, instead of proceeding with the speech at the ensuing line, repeated the appropriate one in the same dismal cadence,

“And when this solemn mockery is o'er.”

That sealed the fate of the play. Had it succeeded, he tells us, it was his intention to have produced a whole series of historical dramas by the bard. Notwithstanding the fiasco, the curiosity as to the papers increased. A whole library, sixty or

seventy volumes, was produced of "books that had belonged to Shakespeare," with his autograph and marginal notes. It was now determined to publish a magnificent folio, by subscription, at the price of four guineas; containing facsimiles and illustrations of all the previous pictures and MSS. As one looks at the drawings and simulated signatures one is struck by the palpable air of forgery—the feebleness of stroke, like a child's, owing no doubt to writing with the left hand. It is amusing to turn over this elaborate imposture, set out with such state and gravity.

"SHAKESPEARE.

"Norfolk Street, Strand, March 4th, 1795.

"Mr. Samuel Ireland begs leave to acquaint the public that the literary treasure which has recently fallen into his hands, forming an interesting part of the works of our divine bard Shakespeare, is now arranging, and will speedily be put to press.

"This publication will consist of a variety of authentic and important documents respecting the private and public life of this wondrous man; an original complimentary letter from Queen Elizabeth, under her own hand, and authenticated by that of the bard; original deeds, contracts, and other instru-

ments relative to his theatrical concern ; an original correspondence with a noble personage upon a transaction nearly interesting to himself ; a letter, and five stanzas in verse, written in his own hand when very young, and addressed to the lady whom he afterwards married ; together with the expression and feeling of his very soul upon a subject the most momentous that can occupy the thoughts of mortal man.

“ All these papers, except the legal instruments, are in his handwriting, and these are under the hand and seal of himself and the parties concerned.

“ In this publication will likewise be given a copy of the tragedy of ‘ King Lear,’ from the original manuscript, in the handwriting of Shakespeare. This copy will be found materially to differ, in various particulars of much curiosity and interest, from any edition of that play now extant.

“ In this volume facsimiles will be given of several miscellaneous manuscripts, and of the title-page and first and last leaves of the play, which, Mr. Ireland presumes, will be deemed sufficient specimens of the whole.

“ The work will be further illustrated with engravings from original drawings which have been found among the manuscripts above-mentioned, and which will add new lights to the history of the British stage, of which Shakespeare may truly be denominated the *mighty father*.”

This was duly published, and may now be purchased by the curious for about thirty shillings. But the unwearied fabricator says: "In order to augment the bulk of the Shakesperian papers, I had recourse to the introducing of volumes and tracts (to about the number of eighty), containing notes written in the disguised hand, while on the title-page of each appeared the signature of William Shakespeare; by which I meant to infer that the books in question had originally been in the possession of our bard." He included Spenser.

He adds: "Upon the margin of this work, in two volumes quarto, bearing respectively the dates 1590 and 1596, I was most particular in my comments; well aware that a writer of such celebrity as Spenser must have attracted the notice of Shakespeare. So much were the notes esteemed, and such was the value conceived to be thereby attached to the two volumes, that a gentleman (who shall be nameless) positively made an offer to Mr. Samuel Ireland of sixty pounds for this edition of Spenser's 'Fairy Queen.'"

But now the exposure was at hand. Men like George Stevens and Mr. Malone, thoroughly skilled in the learning of the time, had been applying their knowledge to what was, indeed, ludicrously easy to expose. Numbers of controversialists rushed into the field. Malone pub-

lished his volume, which is in itself pleasant reading, from the information it contains, and demolished the whole fabric with almost too much ease. Clamours arose; a committee was appointed; and the fabricator was called upon to give the name of "the gentleman," and produce his proofs. Discovery seemed imminent. The young man, who had all along been stimulated by the eager gullibility of fanatics, began to find his situation untenable, and determined himself to discover the secret before it was discovered by others. He pitched on Mr. Albany Wallis, Garrick's collector, as his confidant, and told him the whole. This gentleman, much astonished, but pitying his youth and admiring his talents, behaved with much consideration and good-nature. Dreading, however, the anger of his father, the youth fled from his home in Norfolk, and immediately issued a pamphlet with a full and true confession of the forgeries.

Such is this curious story. The incident, as I have said, produced a valuable work from Mr. Malone, who broke a butterfly on a wheel in exhibiting all his knowledge and antiquarian learning. He shows in the most convincing way that the deception could have been exposed at any moment by even the most superficial knowledge of the spelling of the time. This, too, was set out by a rough style of controversy which was then in fashion, and rivalled Bentley.

The rest of Ireland's life was passed in obscurity. He tried to earn a little money by publishing his "Confessions," and died in 1835.

It is evidence of the extraordinary interest taken in Shakespeare's writings that not once only, but several times, the ardour of partisanship has introduced fabricated writings of his to the public. This recalls a curious controversy which arose so lately as the year 1859, when the well-known "Corrector's Folio" was introduced to the public. Mr. J. Payne Collier, an ardent Shakespearian, whose learning and labour, as well as his private fortune, has been devoted to the illustrations of the bard, was the sponsor for this discovery, which, for the regular book-hunter, has a flavour of romance. He says :

"In the spring of 1849 I happened to be in the shop of the late Mr. Rodd, of Great Newport Street, at the time when a packet of books arrived from the country; my impression is that it came from Bedfordshire, but I am not at all certain upon a point which I looked upon as a matter of no importance. He opened the parcel in my presence, as he had often done before in the course of my thirty or forty years' acquaintance with him, and looking at the backs and title-pages of several volumes, I saw that they were chiefly works of little interest to me. Two folios, however, attracted my attention, one of them gilt on

the sides, and the other in rough calf: the first was an excellent copy of Florio's 'New World of Words,' 1611, with the name of Henry Osborn (whom I mistook at the moment for his celebrated namesake Francis) upon the first leaf; and the other a copy of the second folio of Shakespeare's Plays, much cropped, the covers old and greasy, and, as I saw at a glance on opening them, imperfect at the beginning and end. Concluding hastily that the latter would complete another poor copy of the second folio, which I had bought of the same bookseller, and which I had had for some years in my possession, and wanting the former for my use, I bought them both—the Florio for twelve, and the Shakespeare for thirty shillings.

“As it turned out, I at first repented my bargain as regarded the Shakespeare, because when I took it home it appeared that two leaves which I wanted were unfit for my purpose, not merely by being too short, but damaged and defaced: thus disappointed, I threw it by, and did not see it again until I made a selection of books I would take with me on quitting London. In the meantime, finding that I could not readily remedy the deficiencies in my other copy of the folio 1632, I had parted with it; and when I removed into the country with my family, in the spring of 1850, in order that I might not be without some copy of the second folio, for the purpose of

reference, I took with me that which is the foundation of the present work.

“It was while putting my books together for removal that I first observed some marks in the margin of this folio ; but it was subsequently placed upon an upper shelf, and I did not take it down until I had occasion to consult it. I then discovered, to my surprise, that there was hardly a page which did not present, in a handwriting of the time, some emendation in the pointing or in the text, while on most of them they were frequent, and on many numerous.

“Of course I now submitted the folio to a most careful scrutiny ; and as it occupied a considerable time to complete the inspection, how much more must it have consumed to make the alterations ! The ink was of various shades, differing sometimes on the same page. The changes in punctuation alone, always made with nicety and patience, must have required a long period, considering their number : the other alterations, sometimes most minute, extending even to turned letters, and typographical trifles of that kind, from their very nature, could not have been introduced with rapidity, while many of the errata must have severely tasked the industry of the old corrector.”

There could be no doubt that this was an extraordinary and valuable discovery, if genuine. Almost

every page was covered with these amendments and alterations, which cleared up difficulties in the most astonishing way. The theory was that it had somehow passed from the possession of someone of the old Shakespearian days who had due authority and opportunity for making these improvements. Mr. Collier soon published the folio, which passed through two or three editions, and was hailed as the most remarkable contribution to modern Shakespearian learning. The readings were wonderful for their directness and clearness, and many felt at once that these were what Shakespeare had really written; while the Rev. Mr. Dyce declared that "some of the emendations are so admirable that they can hardly be accepted as conjectural."

"John Carrick Moore, Esq., of Hyde Park Gate, Kensington . . . was kind enough to address a note to me, in which he stated that a friend of his, a gentleman of the name of Parry, had been at one time in possession of the very folio upon which I founded my recent volume of 'Notes and Emendations,' that Mr. Parry had been well acquainted with the fact that its margins were filled throughout by manuscript notes, and that he accurately remembered the handwriting in which they were made. On being shown the facsimile, which accompanied my first edition, and which is repeated in the present, he declared his instant conviction that it had been copied

from what had once been his folio 1632. How, or precisely when, it escaped from his custody he knew not; but the description of it in my 'Introduction' exactly corresponded with his recollection.

"I lost no time in thanking Mr. Moore for these tidings, and in writing to Mr. Parry for all the particulars within his knowledge. Unfortunately the latter gentleman, just before he received my note, had met with a serious injury, which confined him to his bed, so that he was unable to send me any reply.

"For about ten days I remained in suspense. . . . I hastened to St. John's Wood, and had the pleasure of an interview with Mr. Parry, who, without the slightest reserve, gave me such an account of the book as made it certain that it was the same which, some fifty years ago, had been presented to him by a connection of his family, Mr. George Gray. Mr. Parry described both the exterior and interior of the volume, with its innumerable corrections and its missing leaves with so much minuteness, that no room was left for doubt.

"On the question from whence Mr. Gray, who resided at Newbury, had procured the book, Mr. Parry was not so clear and positive; he was not in a condition to state any distinct evidence to show out of what library it had come; but he had always understood and believed that it had been obtained, with some other old works (to the collection of which

Mr. Gray was partial), from Upton Court, Berkshire ; formerly, and for many years before the dispersion of the library, the residence of a Roman Catholic family of the name of Perkins, one member of which, Francis Perkins, who died in 1736, was the husband of Arabella Farmor, the heroine of the 'Rape of the Lock.'

"This information has been communicated to me so recently, that I have not yet been able to ascertain at what date and in what way the books at Upton Court were disposed of. Mr. Parry is strongly of opinion that Mr. Gray became the owner of this copy of the folio 1632 considerably before the end of the last century ; and Mr. Parry was himself at Upton Court about fifty years since, when a Roman Catholic clergyman, eighty years of age, who had remembered the books there all his life, showed him the then empty shelves upon which they had been placed in the library.

"A Mr. Francis Perkins died at Upton Court three years after the publication of the folio 1632 ; and if Mr. Parry's belief be correct, that the copy which Mr. Gray gave to him had once been deposited there, it is not impossible that Francis Perkins was the first purchaser of it. If so, we might be led to the inference that either he, or one of his immediate descendants, was the writer of the emendations ; but as has been mentioned elsewhere, the present rough

calf binding was not the original coat of the volume ; and as far as my imperfect researches have yet gone, I do not find any Thomas Perkins recorded as of Upton Court.

“The Christian name of the great actor of the reign of Charles I. was Richard ; and a Richard Perkins, called Esquire in Ashmole’s Collection, at a date not stated, married Lady Mervin, a benefactress of that parish. Why should we deem it impossible that Richard Perkins, having attained eminence on the stage, subsequently married a lady of title and property ?”

If only the pedigree of this volume could be traced everyone would be satisfied, and this now seemed likely to be accomplished, owing to republication.

The Duke of Devonshire was glad to accept the folio, to add to his other bibliographical treasures. But now, as in the case of Ireland, some critics began to have misgivings, and even to doubt the whole story. Mr. Hamilton, of the British Museum, since dead, took the matter up, and applied a sagacity and knowledge akin to that of Malone to the investigation, and speedily came to a satisfactory conclusion.

“In common with others,” he says, “I had often desired to see the volume, which meanwhile had become the property of the Duke of Devonshire. This wish has at length been gratified. Some two

months ago his grace, the present duke, liberally placed the folio in the hands of Sir Frederick Madden, keeper of the MSS. in the British Museum, with the understanding that, while it should be kept by Sir Frederick Madden in the strictest custody, it might yet be examined, under proper restrictions, by any and all literary persons who were anxious to do so. I at once seized the opportunity, and determined, avoiding all Shakespearian criticism, to attempt an accurate and unbiassed description of the volume from the literary point of view alone. Discoveries soon occurred, to which it seems advisable immediate publicity should be given, and which I now send you in as clear a manner as the narrow scope of a letter will permit.

“The volume is bound in rough calf (probably about the middle of George II.’s reign), the watermark of the leaves pasted inside the cover being a crown surmounting the letters ‘G. R.’ (*Georgius Rex*), and the Dutch lion within a paling, with the legend ‘*Pro patria* ;’ and there is evidence to show that the corrections, though intended to resemble a hand of the middle of the seventeenth century, could not have been written on the margins of the volume until after it was bound, and consequently not, at the earliest, until towards the middle of the eighteenth.

“I should enter more minutely into this feature of the case, did not the corrections themselves, when

closely examined, furnish facts so precise and so startling in their character that all collateral and constructive evidence seems unnecessary and insignificant.

“The alterations at first sight seem to be of two kinds—those, namely, which have been allowed to remain, and those which have been obliterated with more or less success, sometimes by erasure with a penknife or the employment of chemical agency, and sometimes by tearing and cutting away parts of the margin. The corrections thus variously obliterated are probably almost as numerous as those suffered to remain, and in importance equal to them. Whole lines, entire words, and stage directions have been attempted to be got rid of, though in many instances without success, as a glance at the various readings of a first portion of *Hamlet*, which I subjoin, will show.

“Of the corrections allowed to stand, some, on a hasty glance, might, so far as the handwriting is concerned, pass as genuine, while others have been strangely tampered with, touched up, or painted over, a modern character being dexterously altered by touches of the pen into a more antique form. There is, moreover, a kind of exaggeration in the shape of the letters throughout, difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with a belief in the genuineness of the hand; not to mention the frequent and strange juxtaposition of stiff chancery capital letters of the form in use

two centuries ago with others of a quite modern appearance. And it is well here to state that all the corrections are evidently by one hand ; and that, consequently, whatever invalidates or destroys the credit of a part must be considered equally damaging and fatal to the whole.

“I now come to the most astounding result of these investigations, in comparison with which all other facts concerning the corrected folio become insignificant. On a close examination of the margins they are found to be covered with an infinite number of faint pencil marks and corrections, in obedience to which the supposed old corrector has made his emendations. These pencil corrections have not even the pretence of antiquity in character or spelling, but are written in a bold hand of the present century. A remarkable instance occurs in Richard III. (fol. 1632, p. 181, col. 2), where the stage direction, ‘with the body,’ is written in pencil in a clear modern hand, while over this the ink corrector writes in the antique and smaller character ‘with the dead bodie,’ the word ‘dead’ being seemingly inserted to cover over the entire space occupied by the larger pencil writing, and ‘bodie’ instead of ‘body’ to give the requisite appearance of antiquity. Farther on, in the tragedy of ‘Hamlet’ (fol. 1632, p. 187, col. 1):

And crooke the pregnant Hindges of the knee,

'begging' occurs in pencil in the opposite margin, in the same modern hand, evidently with the intention of superseding 'pregnant' in the text. The entire passage from 'Why should the poore be flatter'd?' to 'As I doe thee. Something too much of this' was afterwards struck out. The ink corrector, probably thrown off his guard by this, neglected to copy over and afterwards rub out the pencil alteration, according to his usual plan; and by this oversight we seem to obtain as clear a view of the *modus operandi* as if we had looked over the corrector's shoulder and seen the entire work in process of fabrication. I give several further instances where the modern pencil-writing can be distinctly seen underneath the old ink correction; and I should add that in parts of the volume, page after page occurs in which commas, notes of admiration and interrogation, etc., are deleted or inserted in obedience to pencil indications of precisely the same modern character and appearance as those employed in correcting the press at the present day.

"In 'King John' (fol. 1632, p. 6, col. 2),

Austria and France shoot in each other's mouth,

the corrector adds, as a direction, at this line, 'aside;' the same word 'aside' occurs likewise in pencil in a modern hand on the outer margin."

Further, Mr. Maskelyne, called in for the purpose, applied those potent agents of detection, the micro-

scope and the chemical test, and thus describes the result of his applications :

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

"SIR,

"I trust to your sense of justice, to say nothing of my ancient connection with your establishment (see especially the *Times* of the summer of 1819), for the insertion of this letter with as much prominence as you gave to that of Mr. Hamilton in your paper of July 2nd. As I live entirely in the country, and take in only a weekly publication, I did not see your paper containing that letter until an hour ago. I shall reply to it briefly and positively.

"First, as to the pencillings in the corrected folio, 1632, which I accidentally discovered. I never made a single pencil-mark on the pages of the book, excepting crosses. This simple test of the character of these emendations I brought to bear on them, and with the following results : First, as to any question that might be raised concerning the presence of the pencil-marks, asserted to be so plentifully distributed down the margin, the answer is, they are there. The microscope reveals the particles of plumbago in the hollows of the paper, and in no case that I have yet examined does it fail to bring this fact forward into incontrovertible reality. Secondly, the ink presents a rather singular aspect

under the microscope. Its appearance in many cases on, rather than in, the paper, suggested the idea of its being a water-colour paint rather than an ink; it has a remarkable lustre, and the distribution of particles of colouring matter in it seems unlike that in inks, ancient or modern, that I have yet examined.

"This view is somewhat confirmed by a taste, unlike the styptic taste of ordinary inks, which it imparts to the tongue, and by its substance evidently yielding to the action of damp. But on this point, as on another, to which attention will presently be drawn, it was not possible to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion in the absence of the Duke of Devonshire's permission to make a few experiments on the volume.

"His grace visited the Museum yesterday, and was good enough to give me his consent to this. The result has been that the suspicions previously entertained regarding the ink were confirmed. It proves to be a paint removable, with the exception of a slight stain, by mere water, while on the other hand, its colouring matter resists the action of chemical agents which rapidly change inks, ancient or modern, whose colour is due to iron. In some places, indeed, this paint seems to have become mixed, accidentally or otherwise, with ordinary ink; but its prevailing character is that of a paint formed perhaps of sepia, or of sepia mixed with a little Indian ink. This, however, is of secondary import-

ance in comparison with the other point which has been alluded to. This point involves, indeed, the most important question that has arisen, and concerns the relative dates of the modern-looking pencil-marks and the old emendations of the text which are in ink. The pencil-marks are of different kinds. Some are *d*'s, indicative of the deletion of stops or letters in the text, and to which alterations in ink, I believe, invariably respond. Others, again, belong to the various modes at present in use to indicate corrigenda for the press. Some may, perhaps, be the 'crosses, ticks, or lines,' which Mr. Collier introduced himself. But there are others again in which the whole syllables or words in pencil are not so effectually rubbed out as not to be still traceable and legible, and even the character of the handwriting discernible, while in near neighbourhood to them the same syllable or word is repeated in the paint-like ink before described. The pencil is in a modern-looking hand, the ink in a quaint, antique-looking writing. In several cases, however, the ink word and the pencil word occupy the same ground in the margin, and are one over the other. The question that arises in these cases, of whether these two writings are both ancient or both modern, or one ancient and the other modern, is a question for the antiquary or palæographer. The question of whether the pencil is antecedent or subsequent to

the ink, is resolvable into a physical inquiry as to whether the ink overlies the pencil, or the pencil is superposed upon the ink. The answer to this question is as follows :

“I have nowhere been able to detect the pencil-mark clearly overlying the ink, though in several places the pencil stops abruptly at the ink, and in some seems to be just traceable through its translucent substance, while lacking there the general metallic lustre of the plumbago. But the question is set at rest by the removal by water of the ink, in instances where the ink and the pencil intersected each other. The first case I chose for this was a *u* in ‘Richard II.’, p. 36. A pencil tick crossed the *u*, intersecting each limb of that letter. The pencil was barely visible through the first stroke, and not at all visible under the second stroke of the *u*. On damping off the ink in the first stroke, however, the pencil-mark became much plainer than before ; and even when as much of the ink-stain as possible was removed, the pencil still runs through the ink line in unbroken, even continuity. Had the pencil been superposed on the ink, it must have lain superficially upon its lustrous surface and have been removed in the washing. We must, I think, be led by this to the inference that the pencil underlies the ink—that is to say, was antecedent to it in its date ; while, also, it is evident that the

'old commentator' had done his best to rub out the pencil writing before he introduced its ink substitute."

After this discussion, it may be conceived, the authority of the "Corrector's Folio" and its marginal notes was seriously impaired. We have purposely passed over other portions of the controversy; nor have there been drawn any conclusions as to the solution of the mystery, which is left to the reader.

THE STORY OF MRS. FITZHERBERT.

THE STORY OF MRS. FITZHERBERT.

“Thee, suffering from this world of woe
Th’ Almighty Ruler of the world above
Call’d from this sinful world below
To realms of everlasting love.”

THIS is a stanza from a sort of dirge that was set to music and duly published on the death of his lamented Majesty George IV., when the whole nation was plunged into the profoundest grief. The other verses are in a corresponding strain, bewailing the good and virtuous king who had been snatched from an appreciative nation. By the side of this loyal tribute may be placed the incident of Scott’s seizing on the wineglass with “effusion” out of which the royal mouth had just quaffed whisky. And yet, taking the whole line of English kings, including crook-backed Richard, Henry VIII., and Charles II., a more uninteresting, selfish monarch than this “First Gentleman” could not be conceived. No title was

so little deserved; for the First Gentleman was, perhaps, the most ungentlemanly of the ungentlemanly bucks and roughs that were about him. Some excuse may be found for him in the tone that prevailed among men of fashion, and which culminated in the revolting picture of manners found in "Tom and Jerry," and the exploits of the bucks. But such cannot be held responsible for the uniform heartlessness and cruelty which distinguished his many *affaires de cœur*. These qualities exhibited themselves when he was almost a boy—when it was said that his worthy uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, introduced him to the charms of low company. The young prince speedily acquired, under this friendly mentorship, the choicest stable-slang and the freest Covent-garden jests, which, with oaths, made the staple of his conversation. There is a picture of him at this time, done in the kind of tender style in which it was the fashion to speak of him—a kind of fair full face; and the newspapers and memoirs were never weary of dwelling on "the charm" of his royal highness's manner, and the ineffable sweetness of his address.

He started on his "first gentlemanly" career very early—long before he was twenty. His good old father—whose character, in some of the recently-published collections, such as his private correspondence with Lord North, appears to singular advantage

—had tried hard to bring up his hopeful heir respectably, keeping him under strict supervision and control. But he was singularly unfortunate in the companions he chose for him ; and it will be seen that one—"Lord Viscount" Malden, as he was called—was about as unsuited a mentor as could be conceived. Where the prince, owing to paternal restraint and espionage, could not indulge his tastes, he found a set of agents, like Lord Viscount Malden and others, who were delighted to exert themselves.

It is certainly remarkable—as we follow careers that have turned out so "romancical"—that three of the heroines to whom the prince offered his affections, should have had romantic careers, with strange alternations of fortune. If we add to these the ill-fated Caroline, Princess of Wales, it would almost seem that he was destined to bring unhappiness and disastrous changes of fortune wherever he gave his heart.

The story of "Perdita" Robinson is well known. Indeed, she has told us her own adventures with a mixture of vanity and bombast that is almost diverting, and for which she is not wholly accountable. There abound in the newspapers of her day an indescribable inflation, a circumlocution, and "fine writing" in dealing with simple statements, that are almost ludicrous. The offensive part of this style was in its application to the varnishing over mean and

base actions with a sort of polite and elegant verbiage. As everybody's private concerns and movements were dealt with in the freest and most familiar style, this euphuism may have been necessary; but it was applied copiously to genteel outrages on decorum, then fashionable, in a degree that is quite amusing.

On this lady's history we shall not dwell at any length. It may be said, however, that her frailty was condoned in a rather unaccountable way; and, to use the euphuism just alluded to, it might be said that "her former follies were more than extenuated by the intercourse she enjoyed with all that was elegant and intellectual in the metropolis." She was a promising actress, was instructed by Garrick himself with more eagerness and warmth than he displayed in the instance of Mrs. Siddons, and from her really beautiful face and interesting manner had much success. Her maiden name was Darby. She was married to a dissipated attorney, though it may be questioned if his treatment of her had much to do with her fate. She was one of the most romantic creatures in the world, viewed everything through a cloud of fancy, and saw in the First Gentleman one of the glorious young princes who glide through a fairy tale, breathing beauty and romance. One of the "menials" of the press who wrote of her career seems to take pretty much the same view, and thus records the dazzling honours

paid to her: "It was in the last of these capacities that she attracted the notice of an illustrious character; and, being peculiarly unfortunate, as has been generally reported, in her matrimonial alliance, after a long series of attentions from such a lover as we apprehend few hearts could resist—whether we consider his figure, his rank, or his accomplishments—she in an unhappy hour of deep resentment quitted her profession in favour of one so armed at all points to captivate and conquer." There is, however, a more prosaic account to be given of this transaction, in which the "illustrious character" figures with more than his usual shabbiness.

She was acting one night at the theatre, when it was known that his royal highness was in the boxes. She saw him from the wing, speaking, as she is careful to tell us, to "Colonel, now *General*, Lake, and to the Honourable Mr. Legge, brother to Lord Lewisham"—a particularity that is characteristic. Presently "Lord Viscount Malden, now Earl of Essex," appeared behind the scenes with Mr. Ford, son of the manager, but "now a respectable defender of the laws"—an attorney or barrister, it may be presumed. The prince's attention was observed by everybody, and the lady was rallied on it by her friends behind the scenes. "During the entire evening Lord Malden never ceased conversing with me;" and the divine young prince, whose ambassador he

was, never took his eyes away from her. On the next day the nobleman called on her. "Mr. Robinson was not at home, and I received him very awkwardly"—owing to this absence, we may presume; but this feeling soon wore off. After much delicate embarrassment, the "Lord Viscount," produced a note addressed to "Perdita," and signed "Florizel;" which indeed did not contain much—"only a few words, but these expressive of more than common civility." The lady would have us believe that she could not guess whom this came from, and the envoy was no less confused. Florizel was the languishing title chosen by the prince, whose language was rather of the stables, and whose behaviour was seasoned by the rowdyism of the day. The envoy affected mystery and confusion and extreme "delicacy;" the lady was still fluttered by the enchanting vision of the last night. Florizel hoped that Perdita would appear at the "oratorio," when he would give a certain sign of sympathy, which took the shape of a mysterious bend over a glass of water.

As Florizel's letters poured in, the "fair" discovered in his language "a *beautiful ingenuousness*, a warm and enthusiastic devotion, which interested and charmed me." A miniature was presently sent, with a truly amusing bit of sentiment; for at the back of the case was inserted "*a small heart cut in paper*," with the motto so often used by these

professional lovers : "*Je ne change qu'en mourant*" (Mr. Sterne had made use of it in nearly the earliest of *his* attachments). Both motto and device were emblematic of the lover ; the heart cut in white paper fully represented the value of his own, and the protest of changing only in death made change next to a certainty. In return she recommended patience—"the best advice in my power"—and received again assurance of the most inviolable attachment. "Indeed, his soul was too *ingenuous*, his mind too liberal, and his heart too susceptible, to deceive premeditatedly, or to harbour even for a moment the idea of deliberate deception." Perdita was very young and very foolish, and it seems probable that for a time she was dazzled out of her sense of duty and propriety by the enchantments of this heaven-born admirer.

A friend of hers said that "the conflicts which shook her mind may be more easily imagined than described." Lord Malden, still carrying out his ignoble *rôle*, offered to "manage" an interview at his house. Another proposal was made that she should call on the Prince "in the disguise of male attire." But "the indelicacy of such a step made me shrink from the proposal." At last a romantic meeting was arranged to take place on the banks of the Thames at Kew. There was much mystery and "cloak-wrapping" about it ; for the prince was

said to be carefully watched and kept under restraint. The lady dined with Lord Malden at a riverside inn, and then, when night came on, crossed over in a boat. The prince and the Bishop of Osnaburg, as it was the fashion to call his brother, advanced to meet her ; but they had hardly exchanged a few agitated words when an alarm was given, and she had to hurry away. There were many of these stolen interviews, always conducted on the most correct conditions, though the " Bishop " used to alarm them by the display of a *buff* coat, whose colour exposed them to risk. This garment he had a passion for wearing. " Nothing could be more delightful or more *rational*," says the lady, " than our midnight perambulations. The polished and fascinating ingenuousness of his royal highness's manners "—what *was* this ingenuousness which so attracted her?—" contributed not a little to enliven our promenades. *He sang with exquisite taste, and the tones of his voice breaking on the silence of the night have often appeared to my entranced senses like more than mortal melody.*" This burst seems genuine, and perhaps this impulsiveness may be the explanation of these theatrical proceedings on the part of the prince and his friends. There seemed to be no occasion for such mystery. He could go to the oratorio or the theatre, and could beat the watch coming home, without the necessity of disguise. On the strength of the brilliant destiny

that was before her—"Oh, how my soul would have idolised such a husband!"—she was induced to withdraw from the stage, and really sacrificed what would have been a profitable mode of support.

By-and-by, however, the prince began to grow weary of this romantic lady. He was, moreover, coming of age, and preparations were being made for "the adjusting of his royal highness's establishment." It was invariably a critical moment for any persons at all dependent on his royal highness's generosity whenever his "establishment" came to be adjusted or his debts to be settled. This will be seen later. There was a great deal of discussion as to this adjustment, but at last it was happily done to his satisfaction; and the moment that matter was arranged he gave up Perdita. It is evident that the view of a handsome arrangement was used as a sort of bait to make him give up this disreputable attachment, and, as in the case of Mrs. Fitzherbert later, he easily consented. "Again do I," exclaims Perdita solemnly, "declare I am unconscious of any just cause for so sudden an alteration." With immense difficulty she got an opportunity of seeing him, when she passed some hours with him in the "most delightful and friendly conversation." He was graciously pleased to say that he did not believe all the stories her enemies had repeated about her, though he did not mention what these were, and

he left her much relieved. The very next day she met him in the Park, when "his royal highness turned away his head to avoid seeing me, and affected not to know me." With that "cut" the drama finished—the curtain came down. The First Gentleman was only just of age. The truth was, in the first effusion of his heart he had given the romantic lady a bond for 20,000*l.*, to be paid as soon as he came of age, and he fancied the best way to get rid of this liability was to ignore the lady as well as the bond. In vain she pressed "her claims;" no notice was taken. She was reduced almost to want—had lost profession, fortune, husband, character. At last, in 1783, Mr. Fox, who was her friend, obliged the prince to acknowledge the obligation, and the bond was given up for an annuity of 500*l.* On that Mrs. Robinson became really respectable, enjoyed the society of all that was decent and celebrated, made many friends, was rendered utterly infirm by rheumatism, and wrote the most romantic rhymes conceivable. She died having an immense number of friends, who were inclined to overlook that one episode in her life.

Thus adjusted, the young prince started on his extravagant career, and in three or four years was plunged in debt. By the year 1784 he owed over 150,000*l.*, and his quarrels with his father, who, he asserted, hated him, and his pecuniary distresses,

became the scandal of the time. The tradesmen's bills were enormous. His father was very anxious that he should marry; and the "heaven-born minister" joined in working this debt and involvement as a lever to force him into matrimony. This demoralising pressure was scarcely becoming the ascetic virtues of the minister. The prince, thus pushed, fell into a sort of hysterical agitation: protested that he never would marry; that his brother might inherit; and that if he was urged further, he would go away to the Continent and live there all his life. These sentiments must have puzzled Lord Malmesbury, to whom they were addressed, a good deal; but those for whom they were meant must have been very dull indeed not to have been suspicious as to his real meaning. Lord Viscount Malden, had he then enjoyed the same confidential office, would have smiled at these symptoms. In fact, the romantic prince was resuming his part of Florizel. He was "over head and ears" in love.

It was a beautiful and fashionable lady in town, Mrs. Fitzherbert, who had now enslaved him. Her story is singularly interesting; and it has been told by the late Mr. Charles Langdale with much fairness and candour, though it seems that the behaviour of the other party to the transaction has been passed over too lightly. His behaviour to Mrs. Robinson might be dismissed as "shabby;"

but through all his conduct to Mrs. Fitzherbert he exhibited more constancy, but also—and it is painful to say so—a certain amount of falsehood.

The lady was full and blooming in appearance, with a rather *prononcé* nose and a large face, very fair, later giving rise to that complimentary and alliterative description, “fat, fair, and forty.” At this time, however, she was not thirty. She was the daughter of “Mr. Edward Smythe, of Acton Burnell, related to Lord Sefton and to Mrs. Errington, of the Stable Yard, St. James’s.” She was now a widow for the second time; her first husband having been Mr. Weld, of Lulworth; and the second, Mr. Thomas Fitzherbert, who, we are told, “*fell a sacrifice* to the No-Popery riots.” One might be prepared with some sympathy for this unhappy gentleman; but his connection with that persecution would scarcely recommend him to any title of martyrdom. It seems he had been “a spectator of the devastation committed at Lord Mansfield’s house in Bedford-square,” had heated himself extremely, had taken a cold bath, which brought on a fever that led to his death. His wife was left at twenty-five—having been born in July, 1756—with a jointure of two thousand a year, and lived at Richmond. The prince first saw her at the opera, as she sat in Lady Sefton’s box. He became deeply enamoured, and flung himself into this new attach-

ment with his favourite ardour. The lady, however, who had a large fortune of her own, and was very intelligent, perfectly understood her admirer and the value of his raptures, and received his advances with much coldness. After some time had passed under these conditions, she was one day alarmed by the arrival of an agitated party, consisting of Keate the surgeon, Lords Onslow and Southampton, and Mr. Edward Bouverie, who rushed in to tell her that his royal highness had just stabbed himself, and that she alone could save his life. The situation was so unlikely, that it is scarcely wonderful all her calculated self-restraint should have given way. She was carried off; but she wisely stopped to call for her friend the Duchess of Devonshire. They arrived at Carlton House, and found the Prince pale, covered with blood; and he announced that he had made up his mind not to live unless she consented to be his wife. A ring was borrowed from the Duchess and put on Mrs. Fitzherbert's finger; and so the absurd scene ended. Lord Stourton long after asked her if she thought it was a trick, or that there was *real* blood; but she said she believed it to be quite genuine, and had often seen the scar on his chest. We too may accept it as genuine, though the story, which leaked out, caused great amusement. But in truth it was but the sequel to the Florizel romance; and though he may never have intended

to kill himself, yet he was evidently one of those passionate grown-up children who have been too much indulged. The lady, who was to become Mrs. Fox later, used to describe visits which he paid her and Mr. Fox at St. Anne's, as this passion was strong upon him; and he would cry, sob, roll on the floor, tear his hair, repeat his declaration that he would scrape together every farthing, sell his plate, and go off with his adored one to America. The party then returned to Devonshire House, where a minute was drawn up of this strange proceeding, and regularly signed. There is certainly no transaction which, on the lady's side, bears examination so well. In every part of a most awkward and involved affair her conduct was honourable and sensible. When she had time to reflect over the scene through which she had passed, she saw the dangerous complications to which she was exposing herself, at once sent a formal protest against the engagement into which she had been hurried, and in the morning left England for the Continent. In perfect consistency with her rejection of the engagement she left behind her at Devonshire House, not caring to preserve it, the signed certificate.

She remained abroad nearly two years, during which time her lover persecuted her with letters and promises, conjuring her to return, repeating his asseverations that she was his wife. One of these frantic letters ran to the length of thirty-seven

pages. At last she was induced to return; and it will be said that her absence was as long as could reasonably be expected. She was a woman of beauty and fashion, and could scarcely be expected to sacrifice more of the best time of her life. Two years ought to have been enough to have tried the constancy of his passion. And here is a mistake that is often made in judging Mrs. Fitzherbert's character. A standard is set up for her that she never aimed at, viz., that of being a perfect self-sacrificing devotee. On the contrary, she was a woman of fashion and of brilliancy, that enjoyed life and its pleasures, knew everybody, and was prodigiously admired. Being such, her conduct is to be judged accordingly. It is when we compare it with that of other ladies who have been sought in marriage by English princes, and who showed no signs of drawing back, though the legal barriers were nearly as strong, that she deserves the greatest credit.

She arrived in London towards the Christmas of 1785. The prince had renewed his entreaties, and she at last consented. Almost at once the prince's friends somehow heard rumours of his intention; and Fox, almost the very day after her arrival, had the courage to address him a sagacious letter, warning him of the dangers he was exposing himself to. It would certainly have scared anyone of more sense or understanding. Fox heard, he said,

that it was his royal highness's intention "to take the very desperate step" of marrying her. "If such an idea be in your mind, and it be now not too late, for God's sake let me call your attention to some circumstances" which should be well considered. It might throw him out of the succession to the crown; for to marry a "Papist" amounted to forfeiture *ipso facto*; and though it had been rumoured that Mrs. Fitzherbert was willing to conform—one of the many calumnies on her—still no public profession or change had yet been made. The marriage itself would be against the Royal Marriage Act, for the prince was not five-and-twenty; and he should consider what would be his position and that of his children on reaching that age. They would not have been born in wedlock. He would have to confess he had defied the laws of the country; and when he came to the crown, the nation would hardly consent to receive as queen the woman who had lived with him without the legal recognition of a wife. Then he should consider the dangers of his position: the King not feeling towards him as a father ought, the Duke of York his favourite, etc. In short, he drew a skilful picture of the perils of such a step. Lord Russell gives an extract from this letter; but, it has been pointed out by Mr. Jesse, has suppressed a portion, viz., a scandalous piece of advice which impaired the value of all his previous counsel: "Meanwhile a mock

marriage is neither honourable for any of the party concerned, nor safe. If I were Mrs. Fitzherbert's father or brother, I would advise her not to agree, and to prefer any other species of connection to one leading to so much misery." That Fox's own character at this time was not immaculate is well known. But to hear such a doctrine pressed on a young man leaves us a very unpleasant idea of this great leader. He was pleased, however, to pay her some compliments; her character and manners were most amiable, etc.

Several writers have dealt very severely with the prince's reply, written at two o'clock the following morning. It is quoted as a proof of his falsehood and hypocrisy: "Make yourself easy, my dear friend. Believe me, the world will soon be convinced there not only is not, but never was, any ground for these reports which of late have been so malevolently circulated. I have not seen you since the apostasy of Eden," etc. etc. The marriage took place ten days later, and this declaration is insisted on as showing his hypocrisy and fraud. Not at all inclined to take a lenient view of this prince's acts, it yet may seem that if this was the dangerous and delicate matter that Fox described it, the prince was not at all bound to respond to the invited confidence, which was but a fair description of Fox's communication. Though the marriage did take place within ten days, it is not certain that he had even then regarded it as so

near, or that any time had been fixed for it; and though the deception was disloyal towards such a friend as Fox was, the prince seems to have had in view the lulling of suspicious inquiries as to what was private and concerned himself alone.

Meanwhile curious rumours of what was to take place were flying about. These were of course occasioned by her return. Mr. Johnes, a clergyman well known in the prince's circle, was dining with Lord North about this time, and received a friendly caution from that nobleman to be on his guard, as he would probably be asked suddenly to give his services. The prince actually made such a proposal to him, which he declined. Another clergyman was procured. On the 21st December, 1785, the prince came to Mrs. Fitzherbert's in Park Lane, and in presence of witnesses—Lords Onslow and Southampton, Mr. Bouverie, Mr. Errington, and Mr. J. Smythe—the marriage was performed.

Lord Holland, in his "Memoirs of the Whig Party," repeats a story which he says he heard from a gentleman of the highest honour and veracity, and which the latter had from Mrs. Fitzherbert herself, that the lady was so convinced of the worthlessness of such a ceremony, that she wished to dispense with it altogether; that she had told the prince, 'that she had exacted no conditions, had given herself up to him, trusted to his honour, set no value on the cere-

mony." She "adduced a very striking circumstance in proof of this"—that no Catholic priest had been called in, which, said the "Edinburgh Review," in a hostile view of the case, was the most obvious way of allaying her scruples, if she had any. When it is stated that the Catholic Church holds a marriage to be equally *valid* whether performed by a Catholic or Protestant minister, though not equally holy, the idea that a lady against whose character during a long life no charge could be brought, and even whose enemies admitted that her conduct was irreproachable, should be held up as offering herself voluntarily to such a disgrace, seems absurd in the highest degree. Such would be inconsistent with her known behaviour and unflinching resistance. But the ludicrous side to the story is the idea of the Prince insisting on the assistance of a clergyman—this scrupulous Lothario, who was unhappily too much inclined to overlook the restraints which ministers of the different churches would impose! But we may be inclined to think that Lord Holland's nameless friend had misunderstood the lady; that she *had* spoken of the worthlessness of the contract *according to English law*, but that she trusted to his honour not to take advantage of it. In this sense she might have seemed to say that she gave herself up to him.

Two years passed by. It was impossible that such a transaction should be kept entirely secret, and

the flying rumours began to take shape. It was unfortunate that the subject of the prince's debts should have engaged public attention at the same time ; and it was only natural that those who were irritated by his extravagance should gladly seize on these stories as an excuse for holding their hand. The fact was openly stated, and it caused a deep and angry suspicion. At last, in April, 1787, when the subject of the prince's debts was brought forward, and a settlement urgently pressed by his friends, Mr. Rolle—a well-known squire, whose pompous and turgid style caused great amusement to the wits of the day—in a solemn speech, threw out an allusion to a delicate matter that concerned the interests of Church and State. Sheridan pressed the matter eagerly, and on the part of the Prince of Wales declared that it was his royal highness's wish that “no part of his conduct, circumstances, or situation” should be concealed or treated with affected candour. Pitt, with much heat, protested, if this matter was pressed, he should be driven to the disclosure of circumstances it was otherwise his duty to conceal. Fox said that this amounted to a menace. He too, on the authority of the Prince of Wales, was authorised to declare, there was *no* part of his conduct which he was not willing to submit to the minutest examination. Pitt explained away his allusion as referring to some letters that had passed between the King and son ; but I think it

was evident he meant a covert allusion to this delicate matter also. This Fox more boldly dealt with. He said he supposed Rolle's "danger to Church and State" referred to that miserable calumny, that low malicious falsehood, propagated out of doors, and made the wanton sport of the vulgar—a tale fit only to impose on the lowest order of persons in the street. There was not the smallest degree of foundation for a report which it was actually impossible could have happened. The prince had authorised him to declare that he was ready to submit to the most pointed questioning on the subject. To a question of Rolle's he answered, that he denied the fact *in toto*—that is, that no form of marriage, "sham" or otherwise, legal or constructive, had taken place. Rolle again questioned him. Had he direct authority for these statements? Fox said "Yes." Sheridan, after a pause, indignantly protested against Mr. Rolle's not acknowledging himself satisfied after these assurances. The other coolly replied, that nothing Mr. Sheridan could say would induce him to act against his better judgment—the House would judge of the propriety of his conduct. Sheridan returned to the attack, and said that such conduct was neither manly nor candid, and that the House ought to come to a resolution, that it was seditious and disloyal to propagate reports disloyal to the Prince's character. Pitt rebuked Sheridan sternly. He said all this came of the privilege of forcing on

injudicious motions ; but they ought all to be obliged to the occasion which had brought out so satisfactory and explicit a statement on so interesting a subject.

A serious point was later raised, whether there had not been an actual forfeiture of the throne, by the fact of going through even *the form* of marriage with "a Papist." And Lord Brougham, in a conversation with the late Mr. Charles Butler, seemed to think that the point was well founded.

Still the sturdy Rolle could not be brought to say he was convinced. It was the fashion to be merry on the subject of the "country gentleman ;" but this squire showed penetration, and a more sagacious appreciation of the honour of the heir to the throne. Later, a sort of compromise was arranged in reference to the debts. Everyone was pleased. Mr. Drake—a gentleman with loud and sonorous tones—convulsed the House by begging to be allowed to join "his feeble voice" in the general congratulations ; and it was agreed that only "a deliberate ignorance, vulgar folly," could have persevered in attempting to detract from the prince's known character for truth and integrity.

Yet the prince was married at the very time. He had gone through a ceremony of marriage ; he had not only told a falsehood in the most solemn and distinct way to his friends, but had caused them to indorse what was untrue. And yet one cannot believe that these

men, who were shrewd enough, were altogether imposed on by his assurances. They must have found out his character for veracity before that time, or at least have had some suspicions, which ought to have made Fox reluctant to be the bearer of such solemn repudiation. Therefore, when we find Lord Russell holding Fox up as being imposed upon unfairly, and as being so offended as to withdraw himself from the prince's acquaintance for more than a year, we are tempted to scrutinise the matter a little more closely.

On the day after the debate, which was April 30th, a gentleman accosted Fox at Brookes's, and said to him, "I see by the papers, Mr. Fox, you have denied the prince's marriage. You have been misinformed. I was present at that marriage." This was a regular *coup de théâtre*. On the same day the prince went to Mrs. Fitzherbert, who was at Mrs. Butler's, her relative, as Lord Stourton reported, and said in an airy way, "Only think, Maria! Fox went down to the House yesterday, and denied that you and I were man and wife." She made no reply, but turned pale. It was perhaps the first hint she had received of the danger of her position. He had thus—first, told the original falsehood to his friends; secondly, made them adopt it; and, thirdly, was now shifting the lie from himself to them. But he did not stop there. Mrs. Fitzherbert was justly indignant at this repudiation—it was said that she never forgave Fox—and insisted

on some *amende* being made as publicly. The prince applied to young Mr. Grey to give some sort of qualification. He refused to do anything that would throw a doubt on Fox's veracity. The prince, fancying that if this objection were removed Mr. Grey would comply, confessed that Mr. Fox had spoken the truth. But the young man still refused. "Then, if no one else will, Sheridan must," the prince said, much agitated. This was not very complimentary to his friend, who, however, undertook the task.

When the arrangement of the Prince's debts came on again—which was on the 4th of May—we might fancy that the two persons who had been so scandalously deceived and "committed" by one who called himself their friend, would have declined to have anything to do with his affairs: but no. Sheridan warmly undertook his cause again, and at the conclusion of his speech clumsily introduced some compliments to Mrs. Fitzherbert—her irreproachable character, etc. Fox's position has been considered a very painful one. He could not stand up and retract, for he would thus convict the prince of telling a falsehood, and at the same time expose him to the penalties of his violation of the law. But we may be convinced that this is all imagination as regards Mr. Fox's "distress," for during this debate he actually spoke twice in favour of the prince, and defended the bringing his debts before the House.

Further, Mr. Jesse has called attention to a confidential note of the prince's, dated a week later, in which he is "ever the prince's dear friend," and "my dear Charles."

To the end of her life Mrs. Fitzherbert was convinced that Fox had made the denial without instructions, and in the interest of the prince; and certainly, had she seen Fox's letter to the prince, in which he was virtually advised "to choose any form of connection" save that of marriage, she might be inclined to continue in her belief. But will it be credited that, forty years later, the prince—then king—totally denied there was the least foundation for "that absurd story" of his marriage? There was not a word of truth, he told Mr. Croker, as to his having had such a conversation with Mr. Grey. There can be no question, unfortunately for the prince, whom we are to believe. Mr. Grey, then Lord Grey, was a nobleman of unimpeachable veracity, of the highest, most scrupulous honour, respected and admired by all. No one could insinuate that such a man would invent a story of the kind.

But the prince had not yet shown his habitual fickleness; and in the curious Journal of Dr. Campbell—recently published in Australia—is given a graphic picture of a scene at Brighton, where the lady is the centre figure. It was in the August of this year, 1787, and on his arrival he went to the ball with

Sir Boyle Roche. The Prince of Wales, Duke of Cumberland, Princesse de Lamballe, Dukes of Bedford and Queensbury were present. Mrs. Fitzherbert sat in the place of honour, next the Duke of Cumberland; the prince was standing by her side. She did not dance the first set, but led off the second with Mr. Issac Corry, a well-known Irish politician, and then sat down with him. In a few moments the prince and the duke came up and joined her. "The prince expressed affection in his looks," says Dr. Campbell, "the duke esteem. She discovers strong sensibility and considerable dignity in her countenance and deportment." What further supports the view of Fox not being offended with the prince is the fact that he was seen by the good doctor walking along the Steyne in the town. "When afterwards, during his administration, he made some overtures to her in order to recover her good-will, she refused, though the attainment of the rank of duchess was to be the fruit of their reconciliation. On naming this circumstance to a friend, she observed that she did not wish to be another Duchess of Kendal."

Nor did Mrs. Fitzherbert want a champion and a man of sense and acuteness strong enough to pierce through these clouds of denial and equivocation. The pen of parson Horne came to her aid in a pamphlet which passed through some editions. In this vigorous production, which was entitled, "A Letter to a Friend

on the reported Marriage of the Prince of Wales," he openly accepts the truth of the story, and styles her ostentatiously "her royal highness." He said with great truth that, whatever the religious opinions of Mrs. Fitzherbert may have been formerly, no one could take on him to say that the lady was now 'a Papist.' Mr. Horne anticipated that she might, when called on, be ready to conform at once to the established religion of the land. Then, as to the denial in the House of Commons, he said, with just sarcasm, that he did not believe it. Mr. Fox knew better how to time such a proclamation. What ! at a moment when the payment of the prince's debts was in question, to get up and make such a disavowal, and give the appearance of sacrificing a defenceless woman's character for a sum of money !

With such a hero as his royal highness, the sequel of this history may be readily divined. After all this finessing, opposition, rebellion, and lying, it is no surprise to learn that very soon his affection for his new wife cooled. A fresh passion came, and took away his affections. By-and-by the question of his debts began once more to attract attention and raise scandal ; and a very curious pamphlet, published by his jeweller, Mr. Jeffery, gives us a glimpse or two of Mrs. Fitzherbert. The pressure of his difficulties was, as usual, ungenerously used to force him into that ill-assorted marriage. He had been reconciled to

Mrs. Fitzherbert, but this step seemed to promise a complete termination to their connection. Yet after his marriage with the unlucky German princess, his liking revived again, and he pressed Mrs. Fitzherbert to come and live with him. The lady refused; but a priest was despatched to Rome to refer the matter to the decision of the Pope, who returned for answer the only one he could give, namely, that she was the prince's wife, and that her case in no wise differed from that of any ordinary wife whose husband had deserted her for another, and who now required her to return to him. The situation was certainly an embarrassing one, and this was the logical view. Many years later we find the prince showing what was extraordinary constancy for him, and the lady still enjoying his favour. Thus, in 1803, on the occasion of a fête, we find the Duke of York coming to Lord Malmesbury on a mission of high importance.

"Duke of York came to me at five. Uneasy lest the duchess should be forced to sup at the same table with Mrs. Fitzherbert, at the ball to be given by the Knights of the Bath, on the 1st of June. Talks it over with me; says the King and Queen will not hear of it. On the other side, he wishes to keep on terms with the Prince. I say, I will see Lord Henley, who manages the fête, and try to manage it so that there shall be two

distinct tables; one for the prince, to which *he* is to invite, another for the duke and duchess, to which *she* is to invite her company."

But at last he began to weary of this old attachment. She found herself neglected in private, and slighted in public, and it was finally at another grand festival, one which he gave to the French King and princes, that he told her plainly she was not entitled to any place or recognition, and which rebuff she accepted as a notice of final dismissal.

She told Lord Stourton the incidents of this separation, which were of a most abrupt kind. She had parted with him on apparently affectionate terms, and was dining with the Duke of Clarence, when a letter was brought to her, telling her they should meet no more; on which, she accepted the position, and made no further attempt to claim what she considered was her right.

We find her, during the rest of her long life, living in the enjoyment of universal respect—going much into society; dividing her time between London and Brighton, at which gay place of resort she lived in a house on the Steyne, which had been built for her by her admirer, a handsome mansion of some architectural merit, whose somewhat faded glories are now turned to the more homely uses of a club. There was long a tradition that an underground passage connected this building

with the Pavilion, and the idea is quite in keeping with the taste and fancies of the royal builder. But some recent explorations have shown that there is no foundation for the story.

At her house in Brighton she entertained handsomely and gave balls. She was indeed always, to the end of her life, in the very best society, and enjoyed the acquaintance and even friendship of the members of the royal family, showing that her peculiar position was perfectly understood and recognised. Her warmest friend was the Duke of York, through whom she would send frequent messages and communications to their majesties. As she told her friend Lord Stourton :

“She owed much of the contentment of her life to the open manner in which she was able, through such a channel, to communicate with the King and Queen on occasions of delicacy to guide her conduct. Such correspondence was always maintained by verbal messages. She always endeavoured to avoid interfering in politics; but at one time, she furthered the earnest wish of the father to prevent the son from attending at a Newmarket meeting. At another time, when the greatest coolness subsisted between the father and the son, who was not even spoken to at court, she obtained from the King (knowing how much the prince suffered from this extreme coolness) a promise to speak with

kindness to the prince, who returned from court in the highest spirits, unaware of the person to whom he was indebted.

“To the Duke of York and the Queen, Mrs. Fitzherbert was indebted for 6000*l.* a year in a mortgage deed, which they procured for her on the palace at Brighton; being aware, as she said, that till that period she had no legal title to a single shilling should she survive the prince. Indeed, at one period she had debts upon her own jointures, incurred principally on account of the prince; and when the Duke of Wellington, as executor to George IV., asked her if she had anything to show, or claim upon the personalty of the deceased sovereign, she told him she had not even a scrap of paper, for that she had never in her life been an interested person.

“Upon one memorable exception only she was called upon by the prince, and, indeed, expressly sent for to Brighton, to give her opinion on a step of great political importance which he was about to take, but her influence then had been some time on the wane. He told her that he had sent for her to ask her opinion, and that he demanded it of her, with regard to the party to which he was about, as regent, to confide the administration of the country. At his commands she urged in the most forcible manner she was able his adherence

to his former political friends. Knowing all his engagements to that party, she used every argument and every entreaty to induce him not to sever himself from them. 'Only retain them, sir, six weeks in power. If you please, you may find some pretext to dismiss them at the end of that time; but do not break with them without some pretext or other.' Such was her request to him. He answered, 'It was impossible, as he had promised;' but at the same time she observed he seemed much overpowered by the effort it cost him. Finding that resistance to a determination so fixed was unavailing, she asked to be allowed to return to Brighton, which she did; but previously to leaving him, she said that, as he had done her the honour of imposing upon her his commands of freely declaring her sentiments upon this occasion, she hoped he would permit her, before she left him, to offer one suggestion, which she trusted he would not take amiss.

"She then urged upon him, as strongly as she was able, the disadvantages which must accrue to his future happiness from treating his daughter, the Princess Charlotte, with so little kindness. 'You now, sir,' she said, 'may mould her at your pleasure, but soon it will not be so; and she may become, from mismanagement, a thorn in your side for life. 'That is your opinion, madam,' was his only reply.

"I must here also add, that not only with the royal family, but also with the Princess Caroline, Mrs. Fitzherbert was always on the best terms. As to the Princess Charlotte, Mrs. Fitzherbert said, the Prince was much attached to her for some years; indeed, he was generally fond of children and young people, and it was only when the Princess Charlotte became the subject of constant altercation betwixt him and those who took part with Queen Caroline, that he at last began to see her with more coolness. Upon one occasion, Mrs. Fitzherbert told me, she was much affected by the Princess Charlotte throwing her arms round her neck, and beseeching her to speak to her father, that he would receive her with greater marks of his affection; and she told me that she could not help weeping with this interesting child.

"Indeed, Lady De Clifford was one of Mrs. Fitzherbert's particular friends."

One incident showed in a remarkable way the confidence placed in her unblemished character. A dying friend, Lady Horatio Seymour, had confided her orphaned daughter to her charge. The relatives—the powerful family of the Hertfords—applied to the courts to have the child removed from the guardianship of a Roman Catholic, and the Prince of Wales exerted himself eagerly in her favour. Mr. Percival, who was Attorney-General, on the other side,

forcibly owned that "Mrs. Fitzherbert merited everything that could be said in her praise; but whatever amiable qualities she might possess, the religion she professed excluded her from the right to retain the custody of a Protestant child."

The Chancellor, however, decided in her favour, as also did the House of Lords. It need not be said that this decision was amply warranted by the result; and the trust undertaken was carried out with the most unscrupulous honour and fidelity. The Prince always took a deep interest in this *protégée*, for whom Mrs. Fitzherbert left what fortune she had. On her marriage, in 1825, with Colonel Dawson Damer, the King sent her an affectionate letter, "bidding her always be kind to her old friend Mrs. Fitzherbert."

Connected with the death of George IV., there is a touching incident relating to this old attachment. When Mrs. Fitzherbert found he was dying she sent to offer to come and watch over him. This proposal, for many reasons, could not be accepted. There can be no reasonable doubt that he was buried with her picture. This was discovered in a curious manner. She had sent him this little memorial of herself, which had been accepted with pleasure. It was known that he possessed three portraits of her, including this one; but after his death only two could be found. The King had every search made, but with no success. She had mentioned her convic-

tion that he had placed it round his neck, and that it had been buried with him, to Cardinal Weld, who repeated the story to Mr. Bodenham, a Worcestershire gentleman. The latter was intimate with Dr. Carr, Bishop of Chichester, who had attended the King in his last moments. He naturally asked him : Did he know anything of the matter ? when the bishop exclaimed :

“ ‘ Oh ! she was very amiable—my faithful friend ! Yes, it is very true what you have heard : I remained by the body of the King when they wrapped it round in the cere-cloth, but before that was done, I saw a portrait suspended round his neck—it was attached to a little silver chain.’ The bishop seemed exceedingly overpowered ; and I took an opportunity to leave the room soon after. I went into the next apartment, where I *immediately* wrote down in my pocket-book the *very words* he had used, and the above is the exact copy.” Lord Albemarle corroborates the story, and the Duke of Wellington, who was the King’s executor, found the miniature hanging by a red ribbon round his neck.

An extract or two from the letters of this amiable woman, dated two years before her death, will not be out of place :

“ I have taken up my pen twenty times with the intention of writing to you to inquire after you, but the fear of appearing troublesome has always

prevented me pestering you with a letter ; though I feel much rather that you should think me troublesome, than for a moment suspect me of ingratitude, or of not bearing constantly in my mind the kind interest you have taken in my affairs. I know I must have been a great torment to you ; but I am sure the kind feelings of your heart will derive some gratification in having relieved me from a state of misery and anxiety which has been the bane of my life ; and I trust, whenever it shall please God to remove me from this world, my conduct and character (in your hands) will not disgrace my family and my friends.

“ I have taken a very quiet apartment and live very retired, seeing occasionally some friends. The Duke of Orleans came to see me the moment I arrived, with a thousand kind messages from the King and Queen, desiring me to go to them, which I accordingly have done. Nothing could exceed the kindness of their reception of me : they are both old acquaintances of mine. I have declined all their fêtes, and they have given me a general invitation to go there every evening whenever I like it, in a quiet family way, which suits me very much. I really think I never saw a more amiable family—so happy and so united. The King seems worn to death with business all day and all night ; but he assured me that things were going on much better, though there

were a great many wicked people trying to make mischief. I told him that I was afraid he had sent many of them to make disturbance in our country. He is very much attached to England, and hopes we shall always be friends."

The behaviour of King William IV. to her was of the most marked and very affectionate kind. He waited on her at her house at Brighton ; was affected to tears when she showed him her letters and papers, including the certificate of her marriage, and "expressed his surprise at her long forbearance with such documents in her possession." A day was fixed for her coming to the Pavilion, when she was to be received and recognised as one of the royal family. His Majesty received her at the door, and introduced her formally to all his family, insisted on her using the royal liveries, and offered to make her a duchess ; but this honour, with that good sense and moderation which directed all her proceedings, she declined. Nay, with the same reserve, she determined to destroy the enormous mass of papers she possessed, connected with some of the most delicate passages of royal history, surrendering them to the discretion of the Duke of Wellington, Sir W. Knighton, and others, who were employed for several days burning them ; scarcely half-a-dozen were retained—such as were necessary to establish the vital fact of her marriage ; and these were sealed

up and deposited with Messrs. Coutts, in whose custody they still remain. They comprise the certificate—from which, however, she very indiscreetly cut off the clergyman's name, for fear he should be compromised—and a letter from the Prince, admitting all that was essential that should be admitted.

There is also said to be the clergyman's own acknowledgment of the part he played, and which thus cures the defect in the certificate. Friends of Mrs. Fitzherbert have often pressed that these should be made public, especially after some attacks being made on her reputation by Lord Holland, but these efforts have always been resisted by the executors and those who represented them. The Duke of Wellington was earnest in opposing this course. There is, in truth, no need for any further vindication, as her high character and position have been well established. She died in the year 1837.

Another romantic story connected with the prince, is that of Grace Dalrymple Elliott, the daughter of a Scotch barrister, who figured with success in the well-known Douglas cause. She was sent to be educated in France, and when little more than fifteen was married to a man as old as her father, a Mr. Elliott. This alliance ended in speedy disaster and separation, divorce, damages of 12,000*l.*, etc. Coming to England, she was introduced to the Prince of Wales, whom she attracted, and afterwards repaired to England ; when

the Duke of Orleans extended his doubtful patronage to her. When in France she was surprised by the Revolution, through all the horrors of which convulsion she passed. She was imprisoned, expecting execution at any moment, but was at last released. When she reached England she was in the habit of recounting her hairbreadth escapes to her physician, who was also attending King George III., whom he much interested by retailing them at second-hand. His Majesty became indeed so absorbed that the lady was induced to commit her adventures to paper, which the physician, as each sheet was filled, duly carried to Windsor. It is certainly a most graphic, vivacious, and interesting account, given without exaggeration or pretence.



AN OLD LADY'S LOVE.



AN OLD LADY'S LOVE.

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AN OLD LADY'S LOVE.

THE STORY OF CONWAY THE ACTOR.

THE figure of Johnson is so familiar, so marked and unconventional, and we are so acquainted with all his "ways," humours, and opinions, that it would not be difficult for any rational mind, well acquainted with his life, to foretell how he would behave under any particular conditions. In the case of most public men, there are rough conventional sketches which do well enough for circulation among the crowd; much as a face with a very hooked nose and strong chin did duty as a symbol of Wellington, or a cocked-hat and *redingote* recalled Bonaparte. And so with Johnson. Any common observer could, as he fancies, give a facile sketch of his burliness, roughness, "knock-down" manner; his pomposity and vigour; his "Sir, you are impertinent;" with a hundred such points and tokens. He would set Johnson down as

having an utter contempt for women ; as disdainful of their affections, as too selfish and too busy to appreciate them.

Yet this would be quite an erroneous view. Johnson had the warmest of hearts. He was tender and even gallant ; love was almost a weakness with him. When an uncouth youth, he was in love with a local belle. There was a certain Molly Aston, with whom he was desperately smitten ; and his gallantry to ladies when advanced in life makes up some pretty scenes in Boswell.

The real attachments of his life were two : the first for his wife ; the second, the well-known devotion to Mrs. Thrale. Mrs. Johnson was a singularly coarse, painted creature, much older than he was, without a charm to recommend her. Yet he was really infatuated by her. Garrick, attending his school, used to make much mirth out of the clownish attempts at adoration on the part of the Edial pedagogue, and would later mimic the uncouth love-making of the future dictionary-writer. To her he was all through the devoted husband, just as he had been the devoted son ; and his grief at her loss showed that this almost grotesque affection was based on the most substantial and enduring grounds. Miss Seward, indeed, described his *grandes passions* ; and it almost reads like Sterne's confession : " I must have ever some Dulcinea in my head." " Johnson," she says, " had always a meta-

physical passion for one princess or another. First, the rustic Lucy Porter, before he married her *nauseous* mother (elegant Miss Seward!); next, the handsome but haughty Molly Aston; next, the sublimated methodistic Hill Boothby, who read her Bible in Hebrew; and lastly, the more charming Mrs. Thrale, with the beauty of the first, the learning of the second, and with more sense than a bushel of such sinners and such saints." This introduction leads us at once to the sprightly Hester Lynch Salusbury, later Thrale, later still Piozzi. It is an oft-told tale—an old and perhaps hackneyed story too; but it cannot be easily passed by, for it possesses an exceeding interest.

At Lord Charlemont's house in Ireland used to be shown one of Hogarth's finest pictures, pretty well known by the engraving, "The Lady's Last Stake." The richness of this picture—the glowing scarlet of the coat—leave an impression not easily forgotten. But its chief interest lies in the fact that Mrs. Thrale, then Miss Salusbury, is believed to have sat for the leading figure. This is her own statement; but the tradition of Charlemont House is, that Peg Woffington was the original; and though there is a likeness, as Mr. Hayward says, in the engraving made from the life to Mrs. Piozzi's own portrait, still this likeness does not exist in the picture. In fact, if Miss Salusbury was only fourteen, as she says she was, when she sat to the great painter,

his picture, which is that of a lady much older, could scarcely be more than the hint of a likeness. What was remarkable about her was her smallness—she was so singularly *petite*. She considered herself, with a self-depreciation unusual in a woman—unless it was an invitation to pay a compliment—to be “not at all handsome.” But she was vivacious, and animated, and *piquante*; and the resigned way she bore the rivalry of the fascinating Sophy Streatfield for her husband, her petulant yet uncomplaining remonstrances, even before company, show that she was interesting. Her learning, which represented the dead languages, was certainly unpedantic, even in the heyday and riot of blue-stockings; and her powers of conversation and spirits, with the acuteness of her remarks, were admirable. Still, but for that wonderful herald Boswell, who has issued innumerable patents of literary nobility, she would scarcely have taken the position she now holds. Indeed, the world scarcely knows its obligations to that amazing book, which brings the reflection, how many portraits, figures, sketches have been lost to us, in various ages, for want of some such record—a record, too, which shows the truth of the remark of Horace Walpole, when he said that any book where a man has set down honestly and faithfully, and without affectation, all that he had seen and heard, must be interesting. Which is, indeed, no more than saying that it is not genius nor

intellect, but nature pure and simple—the foundation of all human delight in the stage—that is the secret of the impulse that makes us buy books and devour them.

Johnson made Mrs. Thrale's acquaintance when he was nearly sixty, when she was a gay young woman of twenty-five, with a tall, portly, and stately husband, whose behaviour, which his age and infirmities made more than usually unbecoming, tried her a good deal. After this introduction, it is well known how Johnson obtained quite a home at Streatham, found there all his comforts attended to, and entertainment which he could hope for nowhere else. He was made welcome for years; and though it has been the fashion to say that he must have been a sore tax and incubus on the hostess, with his humours and infirmities, it is impossible not to believe that a man of such reputation and such powers, with a prestige from his roll of acquaintance among all ranks, would have more than compensated the rich brewer's family for their hospitality. At the same time, on Johnson's own principle of "keeping your friendships in repair," by supplying the place of such as drop out, it is very difficult to keep a single friendship strong and healthy under conditions so intimate as were those of Johnson and Mrs. Thrale; the delicate cord, with the chafing and friction of daily contact, is sure to get frayed, and perhaps broken. One little scene at

luncheon, when Miss Burney came on a visit, shows Johnson in his *unofficial* attitude, when he was most agreeable.

"I could not help expressing my amazement at his universal readiness upon all subjects, and Mrs. Thrale said to him :

" ' Sir, Miss Burney wonders at your patience with such stuff ; but I tell her you are used to me, for I believe I torment you with more foolish questions than anybody dares do.'

" ' No, madam,' he said, ' you don't torment me ; you tease me, indeed, sometimes.'

" ' And so I do, Dr. Johnson ; and I wonder you bear with my nonsense.'

" ' No, madam, you never talk nonsense ; you have as much sense and more wit than any woman I know.'

" ' Oh !' cried Mrs. Thrale, blushing, ' it is my turn to go under the table this morning, Miss Burney.'

" ' And yet,' continued the Doctor, with the most comical look, ' I have known all the wits, from Mrs. Montagu down to Bet Flint.'

" ' Bet Flint !' cried Mrs. Thrale. ' And pray, who is she ?'

" ' Oh, a fine character, madam. She was habitually a slut and a drunkard, and occasionally a thief.'

" ' And, for Heaven's sake, how came you to know her ?'

“ ‘Why, madam, she figured in the literary world too. Bet Flint wrote her own life, and called herself Cassandra ; and it was in verse. So Bet brought me her verses to correct ; but I gave her half-a-crown, and she liked it well.’

“ ‘And pray, what became of her, sir ?’

“ ‘Why madam, she stole a quilt from the man of the house, and he had her taken up. But Bet Flint had a spirit not to be subdued ; so when she found herself obliged to go to jail, she ordered a sedan-chair, and bid her foot-boy walk before her. However, the boy proved refractory ; for he was ashamed, though his mistress was not.’

“ ‘And did she ever get out of jail again, sir ?’

“ ‘Yes, madam ; when she came to her trial, the judge acquitted her. “So now,” she said to me, “the quilt is my own ; and now I’ll make a petticoat of it.” Oh, I loved Bet Flint !’

“ ‘Bless me !’ cried Mrs. Thrale, ‘how can all these vagabonds contrive to get at *you*, of all people ?’

“ ‘Oh, the dear creatures !’ cried he, laughing heartily, ‘I can’t but be glad to see them.’”

But by the year 1782, after Mr. Thrale had died of apoplexy, the old friendship began to ravel up very fast. It is plain that she stood in great awe of her husband, whose irregularities she was forced to put up with uncomplainingly ; and it is evident that the same influence obliged her to put up with Johnson’s

plain speech and rather tyrannical bearing. Thrale, however, was a man of the world, and wished to be thought a man of fashion ; and he was pleased with Johnson's company. But when Mr. Thrale was dead, this restraint was removed. Johnson, whose irritability and infirmities were increasing, not unnaturally resented the altered tone of the lady whom he admired, but whom he likened to a little fluttering butterfly. He then found himself obliged to leave Streatham, where, though he had no strict right of possession, he had still, from long prescription, a title to be dealt with very indulgently. As he found her "snubs" and rebuffs growing intolerable, he took that solemn farewell of the place which is almost pathetic, going down on his knees, with an antique solemnity, to pray for the house and its inmates. Very different was Mrs. Thrale's behaviour, who had the indecorum to tell the public, shortly after the great man's death, that she had retired to Bath, "where she knew Mr. Johnson could not follow her ;" adding, too, that the original reason of the connection was merely "his disordered health." She complained, too, that she had to make tea for him in the middle of the day. She complains of it as "a yoke ;" but she will ever consider it "the greatest honour which could be conferred on anyone to have been the confidential friend of"—Dr. Johnson? No—of "Dr. Johnson's health, and to have in some measure saved from distress at

least, if not from worse, a mind," etc. This might have been true; but it was scarcely consistent with respect or friendship to mention it.

But there was another influence at work, which it is scarcely harsh to credit with the change. This character of Johnson, too, was written after her notorious quarrel with him, and when she wished to justify herself before the public. A portly Italian singer, Signor Piozzi—one of the race who were admired, or spoken of disdainfully in London—had made her acquaintance. He seems to have been one of those quiet, reserved, gentlemanly, but dangerous music-masters, who have so often brought trouble into families, or dazzled a boarding-school miss. It is quite evident that the vivacious little lady was at once attracted to him. She was at Brighton in August, 1780, and was walking on the cliffs with her daughter, when she saw him standing at the library-door, the "Yawkins" of the place. With characteristic forwardness she went up to him, and asked him in Italian to give some lessons in singing to her daughter. She received a cold rebuff, Mr. Piozzi saying that he was there to recover his health and voice, and not for business. But later the same day he started out of the shop, made apologies, and offered every aid in his limited power. The "Yawkins" had no doubt informed him who this important lady was. The same morning a post

brought a letter of introduction from Miss Burney, introducing the fascinating musician as a man that would suit her tastes eminently.

From that time the acquaintance began and prospered. He became quite intimate, staying constantly at her house with some of those eminent Italians who delighted, and at the same time excited the contempt of, the English public by their female soprano voice. Her diary makes various allusions to the visits and attraction of this sweet singer of Israel. Even Johnson wrote pleasantly about her "getting back" her Piozzi.

After Mr. Thrale's death, this liking assumed the shape of a regular passion, which, though excusable in one of the thousand-and-one girls who have taken their music-master for an Apollo, in a woman with a daughter of twenty, and other children growing up, in a widow of ripe age, who knew the world, argues a deficiency either of sense or self-restraint. In her papers she sets down the sort of coldness and persecution she experienced from her children and relations when they heard of her new fancy, and the steps to which it was likely to lead. It has been the fashion to take her side in this matter, putting it on the ground that she was old enough to know what was for her interest and happiness, and entitled at her age to follow it out and decide for herself. But it may be said for the present, before

we advance in the story, that there might be reasonable doubts as to the sincerity of the artist, when it is remembered that she was a lady of large private fortune, and a widow, moreover, with a fine jointure. Farther, let any girls of good position, family, and fortune think what would their feelings be when they found that their mamma was seriously thinking of forming an alliance with the music-master who had been teaching them their do, re, mi, fa.

This sensible opposition then became so marked and vigorous, that she was obliged to yield for the time; and her swain, no doubt with genuine sincerity, agreed to go back to his native country—as disagreeable an exile for an Italian as Scotland used to be for the Scotch.

The trial, however, was too much for the lady. The widow—some years beyond the age that extorted a prince regent's praise—grew "love-sick," languished, and then fell corporeally sick. The doctors gave out the, to her, welcome news, that she must die unless she obtained her hero; and at last wrote the only prescription that could do her good—the recall of Piozzi. The family gave a reluctant consent; and the music-master came back.

All that follows shows that she was eminently a foolish woman. Anyone of sense taking such a step would keep all the stages as private as possible, and strive to let the proceeding jar upon the world as

little as possible. But she at once proceeds to announce the step to her friends with a prodigious flourishing and complacency, and began with Johnson. No one has been more censured than the latter for his behaviour to her ; and it has been so far fortunate for her, as it procured her the sympathy of many readers, and perhaps of many acquaintances. There was always some obscurity about Johnson's reproof until Mr. Hayward published the full correspondence, which makes the matter clear. His reply to this wonderful news was a rough, angry, and even contemptuous appeal, imploring her, in so many words, if the matter was not yet concluded, not to make a laughing-stock or a fool of herself. This was indiscreet perhaps, not justified by the legal *technicalities* of friendship ; but Johnson, though he was said to hide nothing of the bear but his skin, had still a very rough one, and had, moreover, a terrible growl, which, though harmless, was still as disagreeable. He was her friend of many years, her trustee, and virtually guardian ; he had been the inmate of her house ; and if he *did* presume on these foundations to warn her roughly, and almost rudely, very great allowance should be made. A more impartial judgment would be, that he was wholly justified, and required to do so by his office and duty.

The reply, as was to be expected, was in a strain of deep resentment—virtually bidding him attend to

his own concerns, and as virtually renouncing his friendship. Whatever had been his fault, his rejoinder was noble for its tenderness, apologetic tone, and confession of having exceeded his duty. And so that famous friendship ended. But she was sensitive to a degree about the step she was taking ; and on all sides was receiving rebuffs from those on whom she foolishly tried to force her theory—that Mr. Piozzi was something *beyond* a musician—that he had been living in a palace with a Spanish marquis abroad, etc.: unsubstantial sort of rehabilitation, as the marquis was merely a patron of his. This little trouble, like a straw showing the current, gives a hint of greater folly. Miss Burney, a bosom friend, could not bring herself to enter rapturously into the plan ; nor could she warmly congratulate, or share in that partnership of joy which was expected from her. The result was a quarrel with her.

In due course they were married, and went away to Italy. The lady was certainly happy, and her new husband behaved with a delicacy and gratitude and dignity which shows that she had not mistaken his character. But still, in her letters home she must be always restlessly on the defensive ; enumerating triumphantly any attentions paid to them, as it were saying, “ Now, you see, we have not lost caste ! ” At last they returned, took a house, and succeeded in mustering a crowd of distinguished acquaintances

round them ; to which she would again appeal, as a proof that her marriage had made no difference in her position. By-and-by Mr. Piozzi built a house in Wales, and then changed his religion—a step in an Italian Catholic by no means of fruitful promise. Her friend Johnson, had he been alive, would have explained to her, as he did once with admirable judgment, what results usually attend such a change, and that “there is so much *laceration of mind* in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting.” In the case of the average Italian or Frenchman, his religion sits so lightly on him, that the “laceration” may not be serious ; but so much has been given up, that it is likely to end in indifference.

In the year 1809 this gentleman died, after a married life of some twenty-eight years. It was time that her volatile and fluttering heart should at length be fixed, by the sobering influence of a second widowhood, as well as by advancing age. She retired to Bath, and fell at once into that card-playing, gossiping, scandal-loving, racketing sort of life, which half a century ago seemed to be always associated with mineral waters in England. These lingering elements were admirably caught and described by Mr. Dickens, before they had time to die out, in the pages of his “Pickwick.” There, while junketing merrily, and figuring as one of the powers of the place, she was to be the gentle victim of a new passion.

A young actor, of the romantic name of William Augustus Conway, had come from that wonderful dramatic nursery, the Dublin stage, and made his appearance on the London boards in 1813. He seems to have had no histrionic merits, according to the old-fashioned criterion—which exacted gifts of elocution, passion, power, etc.; but according to the present state of public taste his fate was a little hard, as he had all the elements for a genuine success. He had a beautiful face, a remarkable figure, elegantly made and singularly graceful. As it was, these perfections secured him the honour of playing with Miss O'Neil; and in love-pieces, where she was the enchanting heroine and attracted all attention, his other deficiencies might be reasonably overlooked. Presently came the great Kean, and the handsome William Augustus Conway was quite extinguished. When he was acting at provincial theatres he came to Bath, and the widow of Mr. Thrale and Mr. Piozzi—then about seventy-three—saw him, and again succumbed to a new infatuation.

Infatuation is indeed the name, if we may judge by the letters. They are indeed a testimony to the sagacity of Samuel Johnson, now long in his grave, and whose unsparing severity on the eve of her second marriage they more than justify. She was not old enough to have this set to the decay of age; and for many years later was to be accounted the most

amazingly intelligent and vivacious old lady ever known. This pitiable story adds yet another instance of that compromising infatuation, to which the most eminent seem to be the victims.

In the month of September, 1819, she thus commences her amatory strains :

“Three Sundays have now elapsed since James brought me dearest Mr. Conway’s promise to write to me the very next, and, were it not for the newspaper which came on Tuesday, the 24th August—sending me to rest comfortable, though sick enough, and under the influence of laudanum—I should relapse into my former state of agonising apprehension on your account ; but that little darling autograph round the paper was written so steady, and so completely in the old way ; whenever I look at it my spirits revive, and hope (true pulse of life) ceases to intermit, for a while at least, and bids me be assured we soon shall meet again. I really was very ill three or four days ; but the jury of matrons who sat on my complaint acquitted the apricots which I accused, and said they (all but two) proved an *alibi*. Some of the servants, who were ill too, found out that we had, in Bessy’s absence, got some mildewed tea that lay in a damp closet at the last lodging. We are now removed to a palace, a Western palazzino, where we propose receiving Mr. Conway.”

She could be very graphic and amusing ; and one

of the most curious features in her letters is a sort of *badinage*, assumed with great art, when she found herself growing too ardent, and which seemed to plead delicately that she was privileged, and only half in earnest. That stroke of the "jury of matrons" is highly comic; and she rather indiscreetly alludes to "a superannuated beauty fifteen or twenty years younger than myself, but sick and dropsical; her legs hanging over her shoes." This, too, is artfully put, as who should say: "Good care and preservation do not depend on age; for here is a professed beauty far younger, and not nearly so well preserved." She tells him also her really clever nomenclature for the months; which, as she asks with justice, are quite as good as Floréal and Prairial:

Autumn is	{ DRIPPY, NIPPY, SLIPPY; }	To be succeeded by Winter,	{ SNEEZY, WHEEZY, FREEZY; }
Till Spring returns,	{ SHOWERY, BOWERY, FLOWERY, }	and Summer's (as this year)	{ HOPPY, POPPY, CROPPY. }

The young actor, however, flagged occasionally in his devotion; was often ill, and did not write: and then she would appeal to him pathetically:

"I feel much more immediately and sincerely interested in our own meeting after such cruel illness and dangers, and a silence that has shaken my courage more than all the savage shoutings of this

new-fangled reformation. Good-night; and God bless my valued friend, for whose perfect recovery and long-continued happiness I will pray till the post comes in. Yes; and till life goes *out* from poor H. L. P. I would keep up my spirits—as you wish me—and your spirits too. But how can I? Send a newspaper, at least. Oh, for a breath of intelligence, however short, respecting health and engagements!”

She appealed to him characteristically :

“I wrote to fine Mr. Davie Robinson, Villiers Street, in the Strand, and bade him, when he sent my stock of wine to Bath, put half-a-dozen bottles of the very same in a basket, and deliver to Mrs. Rudd, 41, Gerrard Street, Soho.”

But it miscarried. Still,

“I wish my beloved friend to keep his spirits up, but have enough to do on his dear account to keep up my own. Yet shall not the one alleviating drop of comfort, as you kindly call my letters, ever fail. Mrs. Stratton saw the horrid paragraph inserted in the *Courier*—she writes with all possible tenderness, and, I really do believe, true concern. Mr. Bunn’s elegant expressions of friendship pleased me too.”

Elegant expressions of friendship! Here we enter on the sentimental strain; and, indeed, love-making, or love-writing, at this epoch, seems to have followed the model of Yorick and Eliza :

"Here am I, however, praying most fervently for your restoration to all that makes life desirable, and giving God thanks for the power He lends me of affording solace to the finest soul, the fairest emanation of its celestial origin that ever was enclosed in human clay. Such clay! But we must all be contented to bear our cross.

"Accept, dearest Mr. Conway, of a real Christmas pie; it will be such a nice thing for you when, coming late home, there is no time for a better supper; but Bessy begs you will not try to eat the crust; it will keep for weeks this weather. The fleece should be a golden one, had I the magic powers of Medea; but I do think I was baby enough to be ashamed last night of owning I had not three pounds in the house, except your money, laid by for my benefit-ticket, which shall be replaced before that day comes.

"Did I not once predict that dear Mr. Conway would live to an extreme old age? Your Sibyl has always been right, and it was natural I should think so. The oak and cedar are said by naturalists to take the deepest root of all the trees; and when these fancies cross your memory threescore years hence, do not forget the old friend of your young days, should you live to those of Methuselah; none more true, none more tender, none more disinterested will you ever find than

"H. L. PIOZZI."

When he was ill she wrote :

“You shall get through the dusky night, and enjoy a bright morning after all. Your youth and strength are in full perfection, but 'tis on God's favour I depend for your recovery. Whose gifts, indeed, are those of youth and strength, body and soul? His only. And wicked as the world is, I hope it is not necessary for the warning of others, that your incomparable talents should be shown them in a state of subjugation. My heart assures me 'tis a momentary chastisement; for what, at last, is one year out of seventy—the regular life of a common man? Oh, there is yet much for you to do—much to enjoy; and many a day of care for others, now unthought on. How did I ever dream, in 1791, that, fretted as I was about my own affairs, a baby just then born, or not born, should, in the year 1819, take up the whole attention of H. L. P.?”

“Mrs. Stratton and I have had our talk; the result is to *me a proof that your happiness has on this occasion been Heaven's peculiar care*. Her last words to me when we were interrupted were: ‘If you *do* love Mr. Conway, dearest madam, teach him to *despise* her.’ ‘Tell him so yourself,’ said I—‘after the 11th of March; but let us not shake his shattered nerves till then; my own can hardly bear the conversation—for though I thought her false and unfeeling, my belief could not stretch itself to what you

inform me now : nor will my mind be easy till he is assured of her unworthiness either by your hand or tongue.' *Est-il possible ?* is all my wit could suggest in answer to her story. Fuller and Brandt are gone ; there were no proposals of marriage made. *She will fade like the china-rose, as I said she would—and so let her.* Come in the morning. You will sleep better to-night, you will indeed, than either Mrs. Stratton will, who has endured *such* insults : or her whose indignation swallows every other sense—except that of her affectionate and all-subduing admiration of you. “H. L. P.”

“Our canvass goes on triumphantly : let us think of nothing else. *The young lady is quite happy in her emancipation it seems.* Pray let us be happy too.”

“WILLIAM AUGUSTUS CONWAY, Esq.,
“No. 5, King's Mead Terrace.”

But he got to Bath at last, and the following agitated letter must have made the invalid smile :

“Half-dead Bessy—more concerned at what I feel for you than what she feels for herself—brings this note. Mrs. Pennington left me in real affliction ; and if she found no billet at the Elephant and Castle directed to her from Kingsmead, will carry home a half-broken heart. Let my maid see you, for

mercy's sake. 'Lord, ma'am,' said she, 'why, if Mr. Conway was at Birmingham, you would send me ; and now he is only three streets off.' (Artful maid ! Here also following the immemorial precedents ; aged spinsters and widows, from Mrs. Wadman downwards, always accepting such comfort from their familiars.) 'Go I will,' adds Mrs. Piozzi, in large capitals ; 'if I die upon the road, rather than see you swallowing down agony, and saying nothing but how well you are to everybody, when I know you are wretched beyond telling !' Instead of Bessy, James goes : and Mr. Conway was implored to let him 'at least see and speak to you.'"

Motives of delicacy would of course account for the substitution.

Here, in another letter, it seems as if Mr. Sterne himself was beginning :

"I would not hurry you for the world. Take your own time, and do it your own way ; or rather suffer nature to do it—that has done so much for you ; more, I do think, than for any mortal man. See what a scar the surgeon, however skilful, would have made in that beautiful neck ; while nature's preparation, through previous agony, made suppurating ease come on unfelt ; and the wound heals almost without a cicatrix, does it not ? So will it be with the mind. My own hasty folly and my 'violent love outran the pauser reason.' Whilst I am advising my

beloved patient, however, to turn the torrent of his fancy toward the past occurrences of human life, the dear pathetic letter now in my bosom forced me on the same method this forenoon, when my heart really sank at the thought of such coarse conduct."

This high-flown style is delicious ; and *suppurating ease* is true medical sentiment. Mr. Conway had been contemned by a young lady to whom he had paid attention, on the ground of his inferior station and birth. His patroness and admirer is furious, and refurbishes some of those old weapons with which she had defended her Piozzi. His family was superior to hers, *des deux côtés je sais ce que je dis*. She went to a party, and the image of the Adonis thus attends her :

"Who, I wonder, was that tall man I met at my last party ? his aspect shocked and haunted me like a spectre so apparently majestic in misfortune. The master of the house was pointing me out to him as if to win his attention ; but no look, no smile ensued. He was not like you, except his lofty carriage. Yet I kept on thinking, So will my Conway stand when next I see him. It was an odd feel ; and your distress presented itself so forcibly to my imagination at the moment, that my mind instinctively understood—all was indeed over."

All this is incoherent and strange. Again the maid comes on the scene :

“Bessy cries ; but begs me not to lose my life between my scorn of your tormentors, and tenderness for your health.”

But it is not uncharitable to suppose that Bessy was looking for a substantial legacy. The lady was now suffering all the torments of jealousy ; and certainly it is pitiable, if not laughable, to see the condition of the poor old dame descending even to the meanness of depreciating a rival.

Mrs. Piozzi writes with delight how she treated this family who had dared to trifle with her Conway. It was probably the old story—a young girl flattered at the attentions of a handsome young fellow unsuitable in station, and the object of her civility interpreting it as serious encouragement.

“Now, however, I rise to say how the evening at Eckersall’s passed off. Mrs. Stratton and her eldest granddaughter came early ; so I returned their salutation much as usual—only refusing the hands I could not touch—and talked with Mr. Fuller about ancient Thebes, its hundred gates, etc. The young lady’s airy manner—such as you describe rightly, contrasting with your own cruel situation—quite shocked me. No crying, no cast-down looks, no whimpering, as last year—changeable as the weather or the wind, she seems at perfect ease. Mrs. Stratton not so. Waddling up to me in the course of the night, she said she wanted to talk with me. ‘Impossible!’

was the reply. 'My life is spent in such a crowd of late.' 'But on a particular subject, Mrs. Piozzi.' 'Lord, ma'am, who can talk on particular subjects in an assembly-room? and the king ill beside!' So there it ended; and for me there it shall end."

Mr. Conway could not have been in the least obliged to her for this championship. No doubt he would have been eager to know what Mrs. Stratton had to say. She being "quite shocked" at the young lady's airy manner is true old woman's spite. But presently she cannot contain her spite and jealousy.

"'Tis not a year and a quarter since dear Conway, accepting of my portrait sent to Birmingham, said to the bringer, 'Oh, if your lady but retains her friendship—oh, if I can but keep her patronage—I care not for the rest!' And now, when that friendship follows you through sickness and through sorrow—now that her patronage is daily rising in importance—upon a lock of hair given or refused by *une petite traitresse* hangs all the happiness of my once high-spirited and high-blooded friend. Let it not be so. Exalt thy love, dejected heart, and rise superior to such narrow minds. Do not, however, fancy she will ever be punished in the way you mentio. No, no; she'll wither on the thorny stem, dropping the faded and ungathered leaves; a china-rose of no good scent or flavour, false in apparent sweetness, deceitful

when depended on—unlike the flower produced in colder climates, which is sought for in old age, preserved even after death a lasting and an elegant perfume—a medicine, too, for those whose shattered nerves require astringent remedies!”

Then she enters on a religious homily. It was preaching, she owned, but still it came from “a heart, as Mrs. Lee says, twenty-six years old, and, as H. L. P. feels it to be, all your own.” She would “die to serve him;” and sends a bottle of wine, also a partridge. “The Courtenays all inquired for my Conway; all who seek favour of me ask for you; all but——” Which aposiopesis, of course, is for the benefit of the little *trattresse*. Her indefatigable arts in trying to propitiate him show the highest ingenuity. She, as it were, flies up and down, driving a nail here, a nail there, into the coffin of his affection for her rival. Yet it is easy to see her uneasiness, as the uneasy thought must have flashed across her at times that she was *too old* for these dalliances. Then her impulse is to stifle any such association in his mind by the judicious offering of wine, or a partridge, or, more frequently still, by taking and disposing of *tickets* for his benefit. The mixture of flattery—the wish to make herself of importance, and, at the same time, give *him* the idea that his merits alone were the cause of the sale of the tickets—this little contention of motives can be read plainly in the following:

"I was happy to see my dear friend's handwriting, as soon as I came home, and the tickets. I must certainly have another box secured in my name, if you have no objection. You see by the enclosed how they will insist on coming to what they call my places. My Welsh friends, however, have more wit. Mr. and Mrs. Lutwyche gave me two bank-notes for two tickets, and they must have front seats in the next *loge* to where I sit myself."

It would seem almost that he was disappointed at her so cavalierly refusing to listen to what the mother of his beloved had to say, for the conversation came off later. Some of the passages are worth noting as touches of human character.

This was at the end of February, 1820, and this is the last of these curious letters. In another month the poor lady died, eighty-two years old.

The young actor pursued his career. It is not mentioned whether he "took," as the phrase runs, anything under her will. He certainly might have reasonable expectations, even as compensation for the ridicule he must have endured in Bath circles. He pursued his theatrical course, but seems to have failed everywhere, or to have left that undefined impression of neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction, and which is almost as bad as failure.

Mr. Jerdan knew him well, and thus speaks of him :

“He appeared in the highest walks of tragedy, and in several leading parts made a very favourable impression upon the public. He was a tall, handsome, and manly person—too tall for the boards of a small theatre like the Haymarket, to which he went from the larger house—and owing to some cause unknown, he provoked the bitterest criticism of the *Examiner* newspaper, which preyed upon his sensitive mind and injured him in the opinion of the audiences. He was compared to Gog, and his height turned into ridicule; till at last, in a passion of disgust and despair, occasioned by private circumstances even more than by the constant satire of his remorseless critics, he rushed into what he deemed the menial office of prompter at the Haymarket, and courted the apparent degradation as the means for earning his daily bread. It was a sore conflict; for Conway was a perfect gentleman, and his history a calamitous one. He was the natural son of Lord William Conway. He was well educated, or had done much in that way for himself, and obtained an honourable position in society. I have only to premise that I felt a warm regard for Mr. Conway, and that he was often a welcome guest at my house.”

The unhappy actor prevailed on the journalist to take up his case, and unfolded his wrongs to him in the following complaint:

“I gladly avail myself of your kind permission

to renew, through this medium, the subject of our last conversation, and though experience forbids me to entertain any sanguine hope from your promised interference, my most sincere acknowledgments will be yours for your friendly endeavours to serve me. In that conversation I spoke of Lord William Conway as my father, and I must now inform you that, owing to peculiar circumstances, he has never supported or assisted me, and though not formally disowned, I am not acknowledged by him. My various letters soliciting that act of justice, or an interview to enable me to demonstrate my claims to it, remain unanswered. On one occasion I traced him to an inn at Ringwood, and in a note, which I prevailed upon the landlord to place in his hands, implored an audience, if only for a few minutes. Instead of granting it, however, he referred me in general terms to his family. I then wrote to the late marquis, and to give weight to my application procured it to be conveyed by persons of rank—the Hon. Mr. Tollemache and his lady, the Duchess of Roxburghe, who had frequently distinguished me by their kindness and hospitality. The marquis acknowledged that he had always understood me to belong to his family, but added that, unless Lord William became himself my advocate, he did not feel called upon to render me assistance. I next sought Lord Robert, by whom I was very courteously received, and afterwards Lord

George; but owing to their alleged disunion from their brother I could not obtain from them any promotion of my object. My last effort was through the assistance of a particular friend, a gentleman eminent in the literary world, whose knowledge of my straitened circumstances and natural claims upon the Hertford family induced him to seek an interview with the late marquis for the purpose of pleading my pretensions. On account of ill-health the marquis declined seeing him, but intimated his readiness to receive a written communication. Such communication was accordingly made, but did not obtain an acknowledgment. I send you a copy of it, and of the request which preceded it, that you may be able to appreciate the strength of that application, which was not honoured even with a reply."

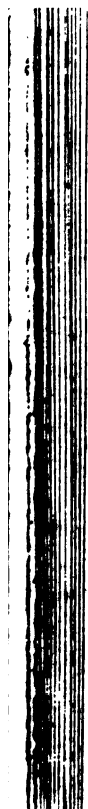
Mr. Jerdan addressed various appeals to the head of the family, but without success. Finally, repulsed and despairing, the unhappy man determined to quit the country. From Liverpool he wrote his last letter:

"My passage is now secured in the *Columbia* packet, Captain Rogers; my luggage on board, and I summoned to follow it early to-morrow morning. As this, then, may be the last time of my addressing you, accept the assurance of my unfeigned respect and devoted regard. Accept also my warm acknowledgment of the zeal and promptitude with

which you have on many occasions stood forward to vindicate my professional and improve my personal pretensions."

In America he completed his series of failures. Too sensitive to laugh at newspaper squibs and critiques, or even to learn the art of appearing indifferent, he sank into despondency, and became "serious," as it is called. This developed into a morbid dejection. On a voyage from New York to Charleston it was noticed how silent and dejected he was, and that, though the weather was raw, he persisted in wearing only the lightest summer apparel. On the 24th January, 1828, when the passengers were going down to dinner, he told the captain "he should never want dinner more," and presently flung himself overboard. The body was recovered. His effects were sold, and among them were the curious letters which may have just excited the amusement and pity of the reader.*

* They are published in a little pamphlet by Mr. J. Russell Smith, of Soho.



THE STORY OF HUGH ELLIOT.



THE STORY OF HUGH ELLIOT.

ONE of the most interesting and striking figures of his time—brilliant, intrepid, with a dash of “bravura,”—was Hugh Elliot, of Minto, brother of the amiable and popular Sir Gilbert Elliot, afterwards Lord Minto. The story of this Scotch gentleman is truly romantic, and, with a little exaggeration, might have been transferred to the pages of Dumas. He had much, indeed, of the reckless spirit of D’Artagnan, and his adventures in love and quarrel had a good deal of the flavour of that hero’s proceedings. It supplies this reflection, too—that the difficulty of communication in those old times was favourable to the development of character, as it obliged persons in a position of responsibility to act for themselves, and with resolution, and to carry out a plan whose execution might be spread over a long time. Hence the race of excellent diplomatists who served England so

well, and could not be checked or assisted in their exertions by the telegraph or the railway, but by some slow-moving courier, who often was many weeks on the road.

When a young fellow, Hugh Elliot was sent, like the young men of condition, to travel, with suitable introductions. Young as he was, he was one that could recommend himself, or would at least do honour to his introducers.

The extraordinary feature of this almost fascinating character was the amazing spirit, vivacity, and cleverness which manifested itself even when he was a mere lad. His tutor wrote of him :

“In everything where Hugh’s age admits, he is really wonderful.” Two months later he adds : “Your two young men are going on well in their studies, and are superior to most of their companions. I never had occasion to see two brothers so contrasted ; and indeed I should find it a more difficult task to manage Hugh were it not for the example of his brother. He is lively, agreeable, and popular. No wonder if now and then his vivacity is above his reason. Hugh has great honesty and candour,” he writes on another occasion ; “if his quickness and vivacity hurry him away, it will not be for want of taste and penetration.”

When he was sent abroad, being but little over seventeen, he seems to have captivated foreigners by the same engaging manner and spirit. Madame du

Deffand wrote to Walpole : “ We have here two sons of Mr. Elliot. They are wonderfully agreeable, can speak French perfectly, are gay, modest, and polished. Everybody is delighted with them. I see them here very often ; but they require no patronage to get on.”

Lord Stormont wrote of him : “ I must leave off, as I have several letters on hand, and give a little farewell dinner for Elliot, who sets out to-morrow. I really see him go with much concern. The sweetness of his disposition, the manner in which the *Elements are blended* in him, the variety of his accomplishments and pursuits, make him a young man so much after my heart, that I often lament in secret I am not the father of such a son.”

His taste, as might be expected, was for the field. When he was a child, he had been given a commission in the Army, according to the custom of the time—his promotion going on during the interval. As this abuse had been denounced openly by Wilkes, with allusion to his special instance, the Secretary-at-War refused to ratify it, to his infinite disappointment. In his disgust he set off to join the foreign armies as a volunteer, and thus gratify his passion for fighting. He attached himself to the Russian army, and in a very short time—though little more than a youth—had made the reputation of a sort of Paladin. In the official history of the

time we read, under date 1773, that he was with the Russians, fighting the Turks, before Giurgevo :

“An Englishman named Elliot, in the service of Russia, distinguished himself in an extraordinary manner at Giurgevo. He sprang with no less agility than boldness over the heads and sabres of the Spahis, and fell into the river, which he crossed by swimming. A family tradition,” Lady Minto adds, “exists of his having accomplished part of the distance by holding on to the tail of a Cossack’s horse. Another story is alluded to in the family letters, which must have happened about this time, of a wonderfully rapid journey made by him” (probably from the camp to Warsaw), “all the authorities on the route vying with each other in expediting the traveller, who represented himself to be the husband of a Moldavian princess, flying back to her after a triumphant campaign.”

Marshal Romanzow wrote to compliment him : “Let me speak to you as a friend. You have more than maintained the opinion I formed of you. You have exposed yourself enough.” He was with difficulty induced to yield to the entreaties of his family and come home, and prevailed on to adopt diplomacy as a profession. He was appointed almost at once as minister at Munich, where he at once established a reputation for gaiety, pleasant repartee and prompt, if not too ready, action. He was sent

to Berlin, where his intrepidity, high spirits, and love of adventure gained him the friendship and indulgence for his escapades (very necessary) from every remarkable person, including the king. His singular temperament is shown by an instance such as that of which Mr. Pitt reminded him, in a letter : "Spirits such as when, on hearing of that great and total defeat of Gates's army by Burgoyne, you threw a whole basin of milk over me."

A good specimen of the style in which he could resent an affront is shown in his treatment of a Frenchman who had just heard of the acknowledgment by France of the independence of America, and who, thrusting his face in that of the English minister, said with a sneer : "Voilà un fameux soufflet que la France a donné à l'Angleterre !" "Et voilà le soufflet que l'Angleterre rend à la France par ma main !" exclaimed the representative of England, accompanying the words with a stinging box on the ear.

But the diplomatists of those days, and, indeed, Englishmen abroad, were ever prompt to vindicate the honour of their country in the fashion then in vogue, and the same high spirit prompted Lord Whitworth, English Ambassador at Paris, on Bonaparte's making, at an audience, some demonstration of menace, to draw back promptly and lay his hand on his sword, which had the instant effect of cowing

the consular despot. A more characteristic instance is recorded of a young scion of the Lothian family, Lord Kerr, who, then a boy, was serving on a campaign under his general. They were feasting with some German officers, when one of the latter "flipping" water out of a wineglass, purposely splashed his face, to the amusement of his friends. The young fellow laughed and took no notice, but his old general, at the end of the night, called him aside and said gravely: "I fear, nephew, you must take some notice of what was done to you to-night, in public." The young soldier replied: "Uncle, I knew too well what was due to your honour and that of our family. I have already called out the officer. We fought, and I ran him through the body."

In 1777, there were some American agents at Berlin, named Sayre and Lee, clever and even desperate adventurers, who were striving to enlist the sympathies and support of the German Court. Elliot was warned from home to keep watch on the "rebel agents," and though the Prussian Minister assured him that they would give them no countenance, the adroit Elliot soon found out they were very secretly encouraged. His own account of his proceedings is as follows:

"Offers were made to procure him secretly the papers of the strangers, and to replace them without

risk of discovery ; which offers were accepted, and promises of reward were given to those who made them. Nevertheless, nothing came of these proposals, the risk attending on their execution being found too great. A German servant of his having been made aware of his master's anxiety to procure the papers, by overhearing him say at his dinner-table that he would gladly give a sum of money to anyone who should bring him their papers, waited for no further authorisation, but broke into the apartments occupied by the Americans in their hotel ; and, entering by the window, forced open the bureau, and carried off, *à toutes jambes*, the papers it contained. The master of the house instantly accused Mr. Elliot's servant of the theft, stating that he had been offered a thousand pounds only a few days before to become an accomplice to it ; several persons belonging to the hotel were arrested."

The police took up the affair, when Elliot came forward, and took the whole responsibility on himself. The papers were restored, and Elliot submitted himself entirely to the King of Prussia's judgment in the matter. Few envoys could have politically survived such a transaction. He indeed offered his resignation, but he only received a mild rebuke from his chiefs, advising him to "abstain from vivacities of language," and be more cautious in his behaviour.

"We had the best reason to know that they

were by no means quieted to the degree you supposed; when you were told that the outrage was forgiven, we had absolute proof that you were only told so, and that it was likely to be seriously resented. . . . The information itself we had already obtained through another channel. . . . You have now only to appear, and to be very discreet in your attention, and in all other respects to pursue the engaging conduct that your own nature would dictate. Let me, however, give you one official caution—recollect always that your letters are for the royal eye, which is so constructed as to be shocked at any coarse expression. You lately said, ‘that a certain prince would do anything to get a shilling.’ I altered the three last words to ‘gain an advantage for his people;’” an odd bit of official manipulation.

At Berlin was the Countess de Verelst, “widow of the late Dutch minister at Berlin, and her daughter,” *sans contredit la plus belle personne de ce pays*. Madame de Verelst, *née* Sophia von Platen, had been one of the *dames de cour* of the Queen Sophia Dorothea, mother of Frederick the Great. She had been first married to M. von Krauth, a Prussian officer. She had one daughter, a beauty and a reputed heiress, whose charms, though she was barely sixteen, had endangered the peace of the last English envoy.

Mr. Elliot was quite fascinated with this beauty,

and was after rallied by his friend on his love for "Miss Cabbage," as they facetiously translated her name. They at last became alarmed, and warnings reached him against venturing on any serious step. At first he had written home slightly of her, that she was a "fast" girl, with the manners of Berlin; yet he had made up his mind. The mother, Madame Verelst, was a crafty, heartless personage, full of designs for the advancement of her daughter. Elliot was deeply in debt, and but an indifferent match. He seems to have taken the plunge about the year 1780. Everyone warned him against this fatal step, notably the envoy Harris, who knew the lady well and what the Court of Berlin was.

But his impetuous spirit could not brook opposition.

"I am married in private," he wrote, "without the mother's consent, to the Krauth; after the *éclat* of my attachment to her, I had the choice between folly and dishonesty—my affections pleaded for the first, my conscience forbade the latter. On my part there is very sincere affection, bad health, poverty, and the other defects of character which nature has bestowed on me, and which art has never tried to conquer; on hers, there is youth, beauty, and strong parts. My project is to keep the matter secret till the king's death. The Prince of Prussia, Prince Henry, etc., are as much my friends as princes can

be. I despise the world too much to fear its vicissitudes, and think her worth sacrificing life and fortune to, if necessary."

As was to be expected in such affairs, this ardour soon cooled. The young bride found herself neglected for parties and gaming. Mr. Elliot had to return to England to arrange his affairs, and did not correspond very regularly with his lady. A separation was even talked of.

He presently had to resign his post, but in 1782 he obtained a new one at Copenhagen. His wife pleaded her health as an excuse for not going with him, and remained with her child and mother at Berlin. He agreed, provided she followed him within a certain time. Her crafty mother sent him reports, one of which ran: "My daughter is well, amuses herself with music, and much more with her toilet. I can't say she loves you as much as she did, but I flatter myself she has a kind of friendship for you. For she is sure to feel that a wife is only esteemed in proportion as she is on good terms with her husband." This encouraging view was supported by some strange reports which began to reach him from friends, and by her determined refusal to quit Berlin. The letter in which she announced this resolve was filled with extraordinary reproaches of his behaviour, which led him to believe that it was not her composition.

On its receipt Elliot, without asking leave, quitted

his post, and, travelling without stop, made his way to Berlin. The Prussian laws were hostile to foreigners as regards guardianship of children, and he was determined to possess himself of his own child at all risks. Under an assumed name he entered Berlin, hid himself in the house of a friend, obtained possession of an intercepted letter from his wife which convinced him of the truth of his suspicions. The favoured admirer, it seems, was a certain Baron Knyphausen, a cousin of his wife's.

“Having learned from the same source that his wife was engaged to sup at Prince Frederick's in the evening, he ordered six post-horses to be in readiness, and on the return of Mrs. Elliot's empty carriage to her house, the coachman was ordered to drive to the post-house; the horses were harnessed; the child, who had been brought there also in a hackney coach, was, with her servants, placed in the berlin; and, in less than twelve hours after Mr. Elliot entered Berlin, his daughter had passed the gates on her way to Copenhagen, without a soul in her mother's house having had a suspicion of the adventure. He accompanied the carriage through the Porte d'Orangebourg, and came back on foot to the residence of the writer of the letter. Together they proceeded to Mr. Elliot's own house, where he possessed himself, without difficulty, of his wife's papers, among which he found the draft of the letter

he had so recently received, in the handwriting of her cousin Baron Knyphausen. Assembling the men-servants, he positively forbade any one of them to cross the threshold during twenty-four hours, under penalty of being *hâché en pièces*, which expression, we are told, he accompanied *d'un air d'Alexandre*, and with a hand on his sword; he then returned to his friend's and spent the night with him in examining the correspondence which they had seized."

On this he sent a boastful challenge to the baron, announcing that "all that was put off was not lost," declaring that he would return for "satisfaction." Then entering his carriage, he wrote his real style and title at the gate of Berlin, "Elliot, Minister of the King of England at the Court of Denmark." He then embarked on board a vessel which brought him to Copenhagen. He then formally applied for leave of absence, and returned to Berlin, when his adventure and its progress really attracted the attention of all Europe. It can be found described by foreigners in many works of memoirs. The lover behaved with an amusing lack of valour. Elliot having written to Berlin that he proposed shortly to arrive there, "when his cane would be more eloquent than his pen to answer the impertinent letters he had received from Knyphausen," the latter *fit le glorieux*, practised pistol-shooting daily, and endeavoured to secure the services of a second. The

baron was dismissed from the service of Prince Henry, and was also threatened with arrest, to avoid which he passed into Mecklenburg; and there Mr. Elliot, who, in ignorance of all that had been passing at Berlin, had sought his enemy in vain at Rheinsberg, finally came up with him at three in the morning at a small road-side inn, where, stopping for a moment to make inquiries, Mr. Elliot was refused admission, on the plea of the whole house having been retained by a single traveller who had lately arrived there.

"Mr. Elliot," wrote Mr. Ewart to Sir J. Harris, "was at Hoppenrade, expecting to hear something further from M. de Knyphausen, who accordingly sent him notice last Tuesday that he would be prepared to meet him on Thursday. Mr. Elliot returned for answer that he would not fail to be with him at the time appointed; but on Wednesday he was informed by M. Knyphausen that they could not meet in Mecklenburg, as the Duke had prohibited their fighting in his territories. Other two places were mentioned, but the appointment was made in so vague and confused a manner that it could not be well understood. Mr. Elliot has therefore given him another, fixing both time and place, and the latter is concealed from everybody except the parties concerned, in order to prevent a second prohibition. He waits for M. de Knyphausen's answer to this proposal,

and in the meantime is come here to procure a divorce and a settlement for his daughter. He desires me to give you his best compliments, and hopes you will consider his present disagreeable situation as a sufficient excuse for his not writing."

"I have," writes Sir John Stepney, "but a moment to inform you that yesterday M. de Knyphausen sent a *most insolent* letter to Elliot, challenging him to a meeting *this evening* at Bareuth, the first town in Saxony. Elliot accepted, and set out this morning at seven. I shall not hear the event till two or three o'clock to-morrow morning, and the post is just going out. You shall certainly hear it by Saturday's post. Some people have suggested to Elliot that some attack was meant upon him before he got to the ground, so two Englishmen offered to accompany him on horseback, themselves and servants armed, besides a Mr. O'Connell, who is E.'s second."

Here is Elliot's own gay account of the transaction : "You will have thought me lost. No knight-errant ever met with crosser accidents. Contrary winds kept us eight days at sea. We were reduced to Norway smoked fish, which completely overturned my gentle stomach. I was confined two days at Rostock. Yesterday evening I arrived at Rhinesberg, and, on lighting at the inn, who should I meet but Monsieur Knyphausen, upon whom I immediately broke a cane ! K. then took a walk out of town ; but as it was

thought very dark, and the gentleman's warlike weapons were not (he said) in order, he appointed me to take another walk this morning; but during the evening he again changed his mind, and said he would meet me upon my return to Copenhagen, as he hoped soon to have a second. In short, he keeps his caning cool; and I consider it as a sufficient passport to pay my respects to my old friends at Berlin, if I am allowed to come in within the gates. I understand there was talk of a duel between me and M. de Knyphausen; but you know my respect for my credentials never can permit me to think of a duel: a morning or evening's walk *par hasard* is all I should ever think of, and certainly not in his Prussian Majesty's dominions. Pray give the bearer any letters that may be waiting for me at Berlin."

"I understand there have been some little tattles going between us. I hope they have not made you less my friend than I am yours. In reading over my letter, it appears hardly intelligible. In plain English, I yesterday caned M. de Knyphausen at Fürstenburg, in Mecklenburg, and was once upon the ground with him to decide any other matter he chose, but he declined it on account of the darkness of the evening, and gave me another rendezvous this morning, which he also declined again, as he says he means to meet me on my return to Copenhagen. In the meantime, my cane is broken, and he did not lift his finger in

his defence. A Mr. O'Connell, a friend of mine, and many witnesses were present.

“At a meeting between Mr. Elliot and M. de Knyphausen, which took place on the 8th instant, the latter fired first, and a case of pistols was discharged by each without effect. M. Knyphausen then saluted Mr. Elliot, thereby signifying that he was satisfied, but was prevented from leaving the field by Mr. Elliot, who insisted that he would not terminate the affair unless his adversary should give, under his hand, an apology for his conduct, and particularly for his first letter, which had been of such an extraordinary tenor; and that he should likewise give a formal contradiction of a very injurious report propagated relative to Mr. Elliot's conduct at Fürstenburg.

“After a number of propositions having been made on the part of M. Knyphausen, none of which were satisfactory, they again had recourse to pistols; but before firing, M. de Knyphausen called out that if either of them were wounded, he would sign what Mr. Elliot required. He then fired and wounded Mr. Elliot very slightly, who discharged his pistol in the air, and his adversary gave him a declaration (of which the subjoined is a copy) under his own hand.

“It is proper to add that Mr. Elliot's conduct has procured him the strongest assurances of friendship and approbation from many persons here of the first rank, and particularly from the Prince and Princess

of Prussia, Prince Ferdinand, and several others of the royal family.

“Monsieur Elliot, après avoir été blessé à mon troisième coup, et ayant tiré son coup en l’air, je lui fais la déclaration de mon propre mouvement que je suis fâché d’avoir eu des torts envers lui, et lui en fais des excuses, de même que de lui avoir écrite une lettre outrageante du 14 d’avril.

“Je déclare encore que les bruits sont faux que Mons. Elliot m’ait attaqué avec des gens armés à Fürstenburg.

“ (Signé) KNYPHAUSEN.

“Ce 8 juillet, 1783.”

Elliot was overwhelmed with congratulations from all parties. The King, princes, everybody wrote to congratulate him on his dashing exploits. Diplomats in every country heard the story, and he became one of the most celebrated personages of the day. He had “covered himself with glory.”

The divorce was procured, and the lady married the baron. Elliot lost his wife and gained a wound. He consoled himself with these lines :

When youthful ardour led me to the field,
My youthful sword a blooming Laurel won ;
When sacred friendship glowed with equal warmth,
My hand propitious gave that friend success ;
With fiercer flame, when Love had fired my soul,
That flame, soon mutual, lighted Hymen’s torch,
The Laurel, Friend, the Wife—these gifts were mine.

The truth is, this *preux-chevalier* was a violent

stormy hero, whom it must have been difficult to live with—or perhaps, according to the old epigram, to live without.

But there was yet another exploit of his—a diplomatic one—which gave him yet greater celebrity. Elliot was at Copenhagen, and there saw that the King of Sweden was likely to be overwhelmed by a combination of the Northern Courts. He had learned from Berlin that England and Prussia were inclined to come to the falling monarch's assistance; when, with an extraordinary self-confidence and gallant boldness, he took on himself, *without instructions*, to set out and find the King, and pledge himself to give him the assistance of Prussia and his country. He stipulated, however, that the King should put himself entirely into his hands. He gave this engagement, and Elliot, still without powers, set off for the Danish camp to try and negotiate. In the same spirit he threatened them with the English interference and the force of the English vessels in the harbour. Justly alarmed by this tone of menace, the enemy gave way, and agreed to withdraw.

"I knew, my lord," wrote Elliot to his Government, "how decisive the appearance of an English minister, at that trying moment, would be at Gothenburg—it reunited the well-disposed, and disheartened the disaffected. An early acquaintance with the art of war and science of engineering enabled me to point

out the most important positions for defence; and the voluntary offer of assistance from the gallant spirit of the English seamen, then in that harbour, ready to man the batteries under my command, would, I trust, have helped me to render the Danish attack of a very doubtful issue, had those very preparations not had the more desirable effect of inducing the Prince of Hesse to treat for an armistice of eight days, in which interval the Prussian declaration arrived; and I was confessed to have been no less the saviour of Holstein than of Gothenburg, Sweden, and its sovereign.

“To so circumscribed a period had the distresses of the King reduced the possibility of retrieving his affairs, that had I reached Carlstadt twenty-four hours later than I did, or been less fortunate in concluding the first armistice before the expiration of forty-eight hours, Gothenburg must have fallen; and I have the authority of the King, seconded by the voice of the whole country, to say, in that case there would have been no safety for the sovereign in his own dominions, and that nothing less than a successful war, carried on by foreign powers, could have rescued Sweden from a dismemberment by Russia and Denmark.”

In a tumult of gratitude the King acknowledged that he had been saved by this *grand coup* of Elliot's, who had shown as much judgment as courage, and had indeed rescued them all. There is scarcely an

example in the diplomatic records of so reckless and so successful an interposition, which only a spirit like Elliot's could have conceived.

We next find him at Naples, in a most difficult position, supporting the Queen and King, and trying to make them act with spirit and courage against the French. The French Minister actually threatened them with the vengeance of France if they did not dismiss Elliot. Prompted by them he remained firm, and the Frenchman lowered his tone. A long series of struggles and mortifications followed, and he was unable to make way against the intrigues of the Court. In 1810 he was found at the Leeward Isles, acting as governor. In 1814 he became governor of Madras, and he returned to England in 1820; after which he generally lived in London, where he was much admired for his wit and power of conversation. He died in 1830, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, there being little difficulty then in obtaining the honour.

This sketch, I feel, gives but little idea of the qualities and performances of this brilliant man. These are shown more in a hundred impetuous speeches and acts, which interested and entertained all his friends. He was "a man of spirit," if ever there was one; prompt—almost too prompt—in action.

The present Dean of Bristol is the son of Hugh Elliot, this most dashing of diplomatists.

THE STORY OF "MIE-MIE."



THE STORY OF "MIE-MIE."

SOMETIME towards the close of the last century there came to England an Italian lady and her husband. Mr. and Madame Fagniani came to London with good introductions, and were received into the best society. The lady was much admired, particularly by the young Earl of March, afterwards Duke of Queensborough, and in a less degree by the witty George Selwyn. She appears to have been a woman of good sense and domestic habits, though stories were told about her. A little girl of hers seems to have been exceedingly pretty and winning in her ways; and the two men of fashion took a great fancy to her, which in the course of years became almost extravagant. The name of the little lady was the pet one of "Mie-Mie;" and this daughter of a rather obscure Italian was destined in the future to profit to an enormous extent by the affections of these two

wealthy bachelors, and to make in consequence a very brilliant marriage.

The name of George Selwyn always suggests the man of society, and the lively, sarcastic wit whose sayings have been repeated again and again. All his jests have what might be called "a quince-like" flavour of their own. His curious taste for attending executions was, no doubt, the subject of much comic exaggeration on the part of his friends; but it lent an additional oddity to his reputation. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, author of the well-known "Memoirs," was his colleague in the House of Commons; and it is no bad specimen of Mr. Selwyn's humour that he affected to be unable to pronounce the name, save as "Rascal," a wilful mistake which had special point from the peculiar reputation of Sir Nathaniel.

Not so well known, however, as the record of his witty sayings is the story of his extraordinary affection or infatuation for this adopted child, "Mie-Mie," which at the time was the talk of the town, and for many years caused him much trouble and harrowing anxiety. This is so far creditable to him; but the extravagance of this affection furnished amusement or pity to his friends. It proves, however, that he was not wholly the coldly sarcastic wit, gibing at everything, or a cynical old bachelor, but a man of warm emotions and sensibilities.

When Madame Fagniana and her husband set off for the Continent, it was conveyed to the suffering wit that, though "Mie-Mie" was left behind, he was not to found any hopes on that brief snatch of happiness. Indeed, the lady showed an amount of good feeling, and, at the same time, a cruel but necessary firmness that did credit to her sagacity and good sense.

"I left London," she wrote from Brussels, in May, 1777, "one hour earlier than I should, for I felt I wanted courage to go through the last adieu. I would wish to find a way of assuring or prolonging your tranquillity as regards your possession of Mie-Mie; but, as I have spoken with the greatest good faith, I dare not flatter you with a consummation which I foresee will be almost impossible. As a friend, therefore, I advise you, while there is time, to prepare yourself by degrees for the worst. You know, my dear friend, that it does not depend upon us, and that, if it were in our power, your wishes should be gratified.

"My husband sends you many compliments, and we both embrace Mie-Mie. I should be very glad to have her portrait, if it be possible; and, since I have left you the original, you might make me a present of a copy. But you are jealous of everything which might recall her to my memory. At all events, I warn you that all these precautions are entirely

thrown away, since not a moment passes without my thinking of her. Adieu! my friend; don't forget the mother of so dear a child."

As, however, he began to plead for retaining this coveted creature, and seemed even to think of detaining her altogether, Madame Fagniani had to speak even more plainly. The family, she said, had threatened to cast off their son if the child was not brought to Italy; and the father and mother now stated plainly to Mr. Selwyn that they would return to London to fetch her if she was not sent to Paris at the stipulated time. "My dear friend," wrote Madame Fagniani, "it goes to my heart to be obliged to speak to you thus bluntly; but I think it better you should know beforehand what is likely to happen. It would only be cruelty to flatter you with false hopes. I am aware that the separation will cost you much, but prepare for it with courage, for there is no help for it."

In this state of things he appealed to Lord March to use his influence, who wrote back in real pity for the situation of his friend: "My dear Georgie—I had your melancholy letter. It is the greatest concern to me in the world to find you so very unhappy, and not to have the least hope of doing you any service. To be sure I will write to Madame Fagniani."

In his desperation, Mr. Selwyn also took the step of applying to the Austrian Ambassador to appeal

to some person of influence at Milan, who was to make overtures to the heads of the family there. He even offered to *purchase* the favour of retaining charge of his idol, by giving her a handsome dowry. But this *démarche* brought no result. The person of influence threw sufficient cold water on the scheme to deluge the aspirations of the luckless old bachelor. "By my means," wrote the person of influence, "they obtained permission to go to London to bring back their daughter. The father and mother are of advanced age, of one of the most respectable families in the city, and they await with the utmost impatience the return of their family, and especially of this granddaughter, whose arrival is looked for by the whole country. If they should return without their daughter I am sure the whole country would speak of it in terms of indignation, and that domestic peace would for ever be at an end in this illustrious family."

The colours of this picture would seem to have been purposely heightened for Mr. Selwyn's benefit, as it is not likely that the results would have been of so alarming and sensational a kind. The "whole country" was not so excited or in so deplorable a state as Mr. Selwyn was.

When the mother discovered this rather underhand proceeding (and she had just appealed to him: "There only remains for you to wish my death and

that of my husband, for then perhaps you might keep Mie-Mie some months") she was naturally indignant, and wrote to him angrily: "You have decided, then, in order to secure your own happiness, to accomplish our ruin by embroiling us with our family; *while at the same time you destroy the reputation of the child you pretended to love.* Learn, then, the result of your imprudent conduct. Our parents, more irritated than ever by your insulting offer of giving our daughter a dower, have forbidden her writing till Mie-Mie goes back. I do not know what devilish idea has seized you. Was it to reward us for our good-nature in leaving you Mie-Mie, or because you doubted our word? I repeat to you that she is not an object of pity. She belongs to a very great house. She has fortune enough, and I can assure you that no greater misfortune could befall her than that of living in a strange country, separated, like a foundling, from her family, maintained *by a person who does not belong to her, and in regard to whom the world would always question by what title he adopted the child.*"

A highly significant passage, and partly disposing of a gossiping story to be noted later. The lady could hardly have made such a declaration to a person so nearly concerned. "You will have received the answer of our Minister," she goes on. "You will

be convinced that we are not adventurers, that we have a country, a family, and property; that our children are as dear to us as are the children of others, and that our reputation is as dear."

This plain-speaking opened the eyes of the infatuated wit, and he made no further opposition, though he bewailed his case loudly. Preparations were made for the little girl's journey. He was inclined to take her over to Paris herself; but his friends earnestly remonstrated with him. A carriage was specially fitted for her, capable of containing a little bed; every step in the journey was provided for beforehand. The hotel-keepers were written to. The most affectionate mother could not have been more nervously anxious.

At last, on September 12th, 1777, she was sent away. The dejection and grief of her would-be parent became indescribable. All his friends wrote to comfort him; and Lords Carlisle and March kept appealing to his sense of self-respect as a man, bidding him exert some resolution and control. They felt, as they assured him, "great tenderness and real compassion for his sufferings." Letters were sent to him every day of the journey, detailing the most minute particulars. Her little scraps and infantine sketches were collected and forwarded to him, giving "some relief to his dejected spirits."

The child herself wrote to him in a sort of scrawl :

“ MY DEAR MONSIEUR SELWYN,

“ God bless you and preserve you, with all my heart, and let me see you as soon as you can. I am your Mie-Mie ; I hope you are very well (*sic*) ” —under which was a big head and little body— “ this great woman, she is my *gouvernante*. ”

This *gouvernante*, Mrs. Michell, was engaged by Selwyn, to attend her to Italy. A Mr. Forsyth was glad to write him reassuring news : “ I saw your little friend set off. If it will in any degree contribute to your ease and peace of mind, I can assure you, upon my veracity, that she set out on the journey in very good spirits. ”

Not long since, it was a curious sensation—knowing, as the present writer did, the incidents of this story—to have offered by a dealer in autographs, a bundle of little letters, written in a large childish scrawl. These proved to be these very early letters of Mie-Mie, written to her doting patron. Here was all that was left of these frantic anxieties and sorrows.

After an absence of a couple of years things began to brighten a little. The girl was at Milan, and was to be placed in a convent. The anxious

Selwyn was, however, still striving desperately to accomplish what he so desired, and with fairer hopes of success, so that some of his friends at home wrote to congratulate and encourage him, as Lady Upper Ossory did, "on the pleasing prospect that was opening before you on so interesting a subject." He at last wearied out one of his friends, the Duke of Queensberry, who wrote to him somewhat sharply : "You are always thinking of the same thing, but it is to no purpose to think, because you can do yourself no good ; and if you let the Fagniani alone, the child will certainly remain for the present where she is. It is impossible for me to be of any use to you. If you thought for one moment I had any knowledge of Madame Fagniani, you must think that at this time, if she knew anything that I wished, she would do directly the contrary." So he enjoins, as his best and only course, to "keep quiet."

Nothing, however, could pacify the excitable Selwyn. He despatched an emissary to Paris to open negotiations. This was an odd person named Warner, one of those clerics who, at the time, "hung loose upon society," and were glad to undertake any job for a patron. He was a rollicking, jovial soul, and his letters are full of a reckless jollity and sometimes of wit. From abroad he wrote home, now encouraging, now discouraging reports ; but at last, in 1779, was able to announce that the family was

coming back from Italy. The ardent Selwyn accordingly set out for Paris. But they had not arrived there, and he wearied everyone with his griefs. Even the King was graciously pleased to take an interest in Monsieur Selwyn and his affectionate anxieties. But the party did not arrive. He remained in Paris, writing, imploring, negotiating, hoping to conclude matters. But after tantalising hopes and delays, the hapless wit found that he was as far off as ever from the accomplishment of his hopes. The parents would not consent. Mr. Selwyn lingered in Paris; his woes and his mournful face attracting the attention of even the French. His English friends, kept informed of all the stages of the affair, affected to be indignant. The miserable man was wasting away—had lost his appetite; and the well-known English physician at Paris, Dr. Genu, assured him that, if he gave way any further to this infatuation, his reason would go. The family, dreading some outrageous step, at last thought it better to come to terms. Within a few days, strange to relate, after all these delays, all was happily settled, and in a fortnight this wonderful child was carried off in triumph to Matson, her doting admirer's place in England. There she was installed as queen of the place, under care of Miss Selwyn. Every whim of hers was gratified. She was taken to Tunbridge, where she was exhibited in a coquettish Spanish hat and lace. The rollicking

Warner was often bidden there, and delighted his patron by his devotion to the little thing. In every letter was a postscript addressed to his "little queen," and signed "your Snail." There she remained until gout and dropsy and old age began to overtake Mr. Selwyn, who died in the year 1791.

Now the brilliant course of this petted child begins. Mr. George Selwyn left her a sum of £33,000, a handsome portion in itself. It has often been assumed and repeated that there were substantial reasons for this extravagance of affection; but a careful examination of the letters shows that there is really no foundation for the story. The behaviour of Madame Fagniani, the proposal of Parson Warner that Selwyn should marry the young lady, and various allusions and points too numerous to enter upon here, all go to prove that this view is correct. The rest of his property and his estates he bequeathed to his friend the Duke of Queensberry; and as this nobleman was interested in his *protégée*, it was likely enough that it would come to her after a due interval.

There was flourishing at court, at the end of the last century, a friend of the Prince of Wales—a wild nobleman, Lord Yarmouth—who later became known to his friends as "Red Herrings," from the colour of his whiskers. Wherever there is royal jollity, extravagance, gambling, etc., going forward, we are certain to hear of Lord Yarmouth. In the

condition of his fortune the young heiress, "Mie-Mie," might seem a suitable match, and accordingly, in May, 1798, they were married.

The Lord Yarmouth who married the young heiress was born in 1777, and lived to be seventy-eight years old. His was a strange career. He could have recalled the beginning of the French Revolution, for he was precocious enough; the early debates of the regency; the wild excesses of the prince, whose companion and friend he was soon to become. He belonged to a remarkable family that included in its ranks and connections the Jane Seymour who married Henry VIII.; the Lord Protector, a man celebrated as a soldier and a politician; Marshal Conway; the lady who ruled the regent for many years, and directed such politics, or rather prejudices, as he had; the Lord Henry Seymour, who was the father of the French turf; the Seymours who behaved like Paladins at Waterloo; the "Queen of Beauty" who was so conspicuous at the Eglinton Tournament; the well-known Marquis of Hertford, whose portrait as the Marquis of Steyne is familiar to all readers of Thackeray. A history of the Seymours would be a singular and interesting record; but passing by the more remote members of the race we may come at once to the more recent generation, whose names are familiar both in this country and on the Continent.

His lordship, travelling on the Continent, was

seized with other English sojourners in France, and kept for several years as a *détenu*. However, he did not the less enjoy himself, having from his rank and fortune the means of securing various privileges and exemptions. In fact the opulent and noble *détenu* was allowed to take a house and live as before, subject to some trifling supervision. During his long absence it was said that the lady was not absolutely inconsolable.

In the year 1810 Mie-Mie's other patron and friend, the old Duke of Queensberry, expired, at the age of eighty-six. A prodigious sensation or expectation was excited by this gift, for it was known that he was possessed of enormous wealth. Like other millionaires, he had found a pastime in capriciously altering and redising of his fortune, and his many inconsistent codicils went nigh to shipwrecking the main document. To this instrument were attached no less than twenty-five of these codicils. After leaving £100,000 to Lord Douglas, £150,000 to Mr. Douglas, and many bequests of £10,000 and £1000 each, etc., to various friends, he gave £150,000 to Lord and Lady Yarmouth, with his two houses at Richmond and Piccadilly, and moreover made Lord Yarmouth residuary legatee, equivalent, it was supposed, to £200,000 in addition. To their son and daughter legacies were left each of £50,000. Originally he had given these fortunate

Yarmouths *all* his freehold estates, but had revoked this by a codicil. The codicils, however, were proved to be informal; hence they obtained far more than he intended. In this uncertain state of things, with such rich prizes at stake, disputes followed as a matter of course. But the principal legatees, the earl and his countess, made special arrangements, compromises, etc., and thus came into undisturbed possession of this vast fortune.

“Red Herrings” lived till 1842, and “Mie-Mie” till so lately as the year 1856. Her vast fortune was well laid out by his successor on those fine pictures and other “collections” which have made the name famous.

**THE
BEAUTIFUL DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE**

VOL. II.

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THE
BEAUTIFUL DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

SOME years ago, the theft of a portrait, supposed to be of this lady, excited much public attention, and introduced many, who had no previous knowledge, to the lady and to her history. The excitement of the public on this trivial occasion was almost ludicrous; though it had been previously whetted by a sensational sale at the great artistic auction mart. The picture was said to be by Gainsborough. The daring character of the theft—the canvas having been cut out of the frame—added to the excitement. Though a large reward was offered, it has never been recovered. Meanwhile the figure has become familiar—the costume, and particularly the large cart-wheel hat, having been adopted, for a time, by milliners, and enjoying fashionable vogue.

Attention was diverted to the “Beautiful Duchess,” who had long since been forgotten. But

the best opinion now is, that it does not, or did not, represent that famous person, since the features are not the same as those of the many other portraits of the lady that have come down to us.

Her story has certainly some dramatic interest, as that of a wayward, attractive, petted, repentant person; for whose peculiar conduct spoiling, public flatteries, and rare natural gifts were accountable.

She was the eldest daughter of the first Earl Spencer, was born in 1774, and married in 1791, when only seventeen. At this time she was described as "a perfect Hebe," in the bloom of health, her hair beautiful, her teeth good, and a most fascinating smile. She was tall, though rather awkward and ungraceful in her limbs, wanting dignity in her movements, except in dancing, in which accomplishment she excelled. "Nature," says Lady Harcourt, recalling her, "never formed a more charming creature." She was affectionate, steady in her friendships, thoroughly good-natured; but, like all other good natures she was impulsive, easily led, and yielding. She lacked judgment. "She enjoyed more admiration than I ever saw," adds Lady Harcourt, who has left some pleasant notes on the "beauty," which have been printed for private circulation by Mr. E. Harcourt, of Nuneham.

The Duke of Devonshire, who had selected so young a wife, was a good deal older, but of a curious

tranquillity and indolence of mind which indisposed him to making any exertion to direct or check the course of this gay young creature. He passively indulged her in everything. Fire and water, it was said, were not more opposed. He was indifferent to everything, while to her everything almost was an object. For some years they had no children to divert her thoughts from the world to which she was so devoted. Gradually her taste for frivolity and excitement increased. She was seen surrounded by the gay and profligate, who by their pleasant devotion and flatteries encouraged her in her foolish course. She fell into whims and extravagances of the most costly kind. In the morning her rooms would be seen crowded with greedy tradesmen, tempting her with all kinds of gew-gaws and jewels, which she was not firm enough to deny herself; and this with an allowance of fifteen hundred pounds a year pin-money—a handsome one, truly, but which was utterly insufficient for another fatal taste she had contracted, that of gaming. To gratify this, and conceal it from her husband, of whom she was in awe, she had recourse to a hundred subterfuges; but at last her position had to be disclosed, and on her showing much repentance, and making abundant promises of reform, her good-natured husband paid all her debts.

As was to be expected, she soon relapsed. Her quick excitable nature, casting about her for further

stimulant, soon found it in political excitement. She flung herself with ardour into the contentions of the day, and, passing some time in France, learned and relished the new theories of the clever men there, and on her return devoted herself to Mr. Fox and his party. This was another unfortunate lapse, as it dragged her before the public, which lampooned and caricatured the fair politician without mercy. There were political revels at Carlton House on Mr. Fox's victories, where the fair duchess was always a conspicuous object of attraction.

"This charming person," says Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, "gave her hand, at seventeen years of age, to William, Duke of Devonshire, a nobleman whose constitutional apathy formed his distinguishing characteristic. His figure was tall and manly, though not animated or graceful; his manners always calm and unruffled. As play became indispensable in order to rouse him from this lethargic habit, and to awaken his torpid faculties, he passed his evenings usually at Brookes's, engaged at whist or faro. Yet, beneath so quiet an exterior, he possessed a highly improved understanding, and on all disputes that occasionally arose among members of the club, relative to passages of the Roman poets or historians, I know that appeal was commonly made to the duke, and his decision or opinion was regarded as final. Nor did the somnolent tranquillity of his

temper by any means render him insensible to the seduction of female charms. The present Duchess Dowager of Devonshire, after having long constituted the object of his avowed attachment, and long maintained the firmest hold of his affections, as Lady Elizabeth Foster, finished by becoming his second wife."

Mr. Raikes thus recalls her :

"Lady Bessborough was a leading character, with her sister the duchess, in those entertainments at Devonshire House which many years ago engrossed all the wit and fashion of London society for a long period, since quoted as the era of refinement and pleasure. Even Lady Granville now, when she meets an ancient votary of those days, illustrated by her mother, will say, 'He, too, remembers Devonshire House.'

"The late duke was one of those impassible characters who allow nothing to ruffle their serenity, high born, well bred, with all the formality of the *vieille cour*. He was the head of the Whig party; the Duchess the active mover in all the cabals of that day. I remember the sensation created in town by her personal canvass for the buff and blue interest, at the famous election of Charles Fox for Westminster, when she drove about in a splendid carriage to solicit the votes of the different tradesmen. One butcher was refractory, and stipulated for a salute, as the only price at which he would sell his suffrage, and the

beautiful duchess yielded her cheek to the greasy suitor. The streets then resounded with the following ballad :

“A Piccadilly beauty
Went out on canvassing duty
To help the great distresses
Of poor little Carlo Khan.
“The butchers and the bakers,
The grocers, undertakers,
The milliners and toymen,
All vote for Carlo Khan.

“In those days the men of fashion were scholars as well as wits, and Fitzpatrick celebrated the same in a Latin epigram which was much admired :

“Quæ dea sublimi vehitur per compita curru ?
An Juno, an Pallas, an Venus ipsa venit ?
Si genus aspicias Juno est, si dicta Minerva,
Si spectes oculos, mater amoris erit.”

“This task, however irksome it might be to a female of so elevated a class, and little consonant as it seemed even to female delicacy under certain points of view, the Duchess of Devonshire cheerfully undertook in such a cause. Having associated to the execution her sister, Viscountess Duncannon, who participated the duchess’s political enthusiasm, these ladies, being previously furnished with lists of out-lying voters, drove to their respective dwellings. Neither entreaties nor promises were spared. In some instances even personal caresses were said to have been permitted, in order to prevail on the surly

or inflexible ; and there can be no doubt of common mechanics having been conveyed to the hustings, on more than one occasion, by the duchess, in her own coach.

“The effect of so powerful an intervention soon manifested itself. During the first days of May, Fox, who, a month earlier, had fallen above a hundred votes behind Sir Cecil, passed him by at least that number. Conscious, nevertheless, that the least relaxation in their efforts might probably enable the adversary to resume his superiority, and aware of the exertions which Government would make to insure the success of their candidate, the duchess, sacrificing her time wholly to the object, never intermitted for a single day her laborious toils. In fact, ministers did not fail to bring forward an opponent of no ordinary description, in the person of the Countess of Salisbury, whose husband had been recently appointed to the office of Lord Chamberlain. In graces of person and demeanour, no less than in mental attainments, Lady Salisbury yielded to few females of the court of George III. But she wanted, nevertheless, two qualities eminently contributing to success in such a struggle, both which met in her political rival. The first of these was youth ; the duchess numbering scarcely twenty-six years, while the countess had nearly completed thirty-four. The Duchess of Devonshire never seemed to be conscious of her rank ; Lady

Salisbury ceased not for an instant to remember, and to compel others to recollect it."

This noble lady's life was indeed rendered most uncomfortable by the open attacks she always invited by her somewhat eccentric mode of dress. Quarto pamphlets were published, inveighing against the favourite form of adornment she had adopted, the "preposterous plumage," as it was called, of ostrich feathers, "but childish in itself, and ridiculous in its enormity, you must have recourse to the garb of childhood, and appear in the most public assemblies in the dress of the nursery. Shall I guess at the motive which induced you to adopt this absurdity; or shall I suppose that you acted from a spirit of consistency, and adapted your dress to your conduct? You have been," goes on this free monitor, "for some time the object of pity among all persons of reason and understanding; and I must beg leave to inform your grace, that contempt is not far behind, and may soon overtake you. As I have entered upon the business of holding forth a picture of your conduct to the world and to yourself, it becomes me to write without reserve, or I should not mortify you so much as to inform you, that even hair-dressers, milliners, mantua-makers, and the whole gentry of similar denominations, lift up their eyes at the mention of your name, and declare you to be a phenomenon of folly. Yes, ungrateful creatures! they make your grace, to whom they are so much

indebted, the chief topic of their professional entertainment. . . . The crowd at Ranelagh, I find, has caught the infection, and, not many evenings ago, the Impertinents followed you with looks and expressions which would have terrified the generality of your sex in the extreme, and which every reflecting person considered as a most disgraceful and alarming mark of public disapprobation."

Meanwhile, as she pursued this reckless course, her debts and embarrassments increased. Lady Charlotte Bury, in her amusing diary, gives some curious evidence of the desperate shifts to which this unfortunate lady was reduced ; and there is something quaint in the way in which her friend Mr. D—— assisted her.

"I heard a great deal from a man of business to whom she was frequently indebted for assistance. He gave me a curious autograph of hers :

" 'London, 18th December, 1779.

" 'Mr. D—— having lent me two thousand six hundred and fifty pounds, I do hereby promise to pay him two hundred and fifty pounds every three months, at the usual quarter days, and continue to pay that sum quarterly to him or his heirs (allowing five per cent. interest, and five per cent. for insurance of my life per annum), until principal, interest, and insurance shall be fully paid.

" ' (Signed) G—— D——."

“ ‘My agreement is that, in case the duchess does not pay me two hundred and fifty pounds quarterly, I shall acquaint the Duke of D—— with this transaction; and her grace has promised, in case of her death or other accidents, to leave in writing a request that I may be paid, as I have lent her the money to relieve her from play debts, under a solemn promise that she will not play in future.

“ ‘(Signed) J. D——.’

“This is a melancholy record of the folly of this great lady, who was one of the best-hearted persons in the world. I have often heard it told of her that, if she had money set apart for pleasure, or for the payment of debts, and that some individual came to her in pecuniary distress, she would always relieve him or her, and leave her own difficulties unprovided for.”

The best sketch of her when she was in all the bloom of beauty, in 1791, is given by the vivacious Fanny Burney, whose admirable and lively and most dramatic scenes and portraits are scarcely appreciated as they deserve to be. She was paying a visit to Lady Spencer, then living in Bath, during the season.

“Presently followed two ladies. Lady Spencer, with a look and manner warmly announcing pleasure in what she was doing, then introduced me to the first of them, saying, ‘Duchess of Devonshire, Miss

Burney.' She made me a very civil compliment upon hoping my health was recovering; and Lady Spencer then, slightly, and as if unavoidably, said, 'Lady Elizabeth Forster.'

"I did not find so much beauty in her as I expected, notwithstanding the variations of accounts; but I found far more of manner, politeness, and gentle quiet. She seems by nature to possess the highest animal spirits, but she appeared to me not happy. I thought she looked oppressed and thin, though there is a native cheerfulness about her which I fancy scarce ever deserts her.

"There is in her face, especially when she speaks, a sweetness of good-humour and obligingness that seem to be the natural and instinctive qualities of her disposition, joined to an openness of countenance that announces her endowed, by nature, with a character intended wholly for honesty, fairness, and good purposes.

"She now conversed with me wholly, and in so soberly sensible and quiet a manner, as I had imagined incompatible with her powers. Too much and too little credit have variously been given her. We talked over my late tour, Bath waters, and the King's illness. This, which was led to by accident, was here a tender subject, considering her heading the regency squadron. She was extremely well-bred in all she said herself, and seemed willing to keep up

the subject. I fancy no one has just in the same way treated it with her grace before ; however, she took all in good part, though to have found me retired in discontent had perhaps been more congenial to her."

The lady who was with her, and her bosom friend, was a person of no ordinary attractions. Indeed, she was so alluring, that Mrs. Gibbon declared that no man could withstand her, that she could make the Lord Chancellor come down from off his woolsack. This lady was destined to take her place, and to succeed her as Duchess of Devonshire.

The poor beauty was at one time drawn into a strange entanglement, which had well-nigh produced the most serious family confusion. She had two little girls, and was eager for a son and heir ; and it has been often repeated, and there seems little reason to doubt the story, that she arranged with a friend to exchange children, and that the duchess received her friend's boy.

"That some such story was connected with the late Duke of Devonshire is well-known. It is public property that the perpetual celibacy of his grace was the result of an arrangement by which he was to wear the title by consent for his life, it then passing to his cousin the rightful heir. Lady Charlotte Bury relates 'that the present Duke of Devonshire appeared for a length of time to have a strong aversion to his

mother-in-law, the sometime Lady Dover; and one day, when she hung over him and kissed his forehead, the duke turned away as though he had been touched by a basilisk. But subsequently, after his repeated visits to her when she resided chiefly at Rome, his manner entirely changed, and he evinced the utmost pleasure in her society, and the greatest affection for her person. It was said that this change in his feelings towards her was wrought by the Duchess having declared to him the secret of his birth, and his being her own child. It is also said that this great man cannot marry. Rumour says, the Duke is only suffered by the rightful heir to enjoy the title and estates for his lifetime, in order not to disgrace the family by a disclosure of the truth. But possibly the whole of these suppositions are false, and perhaps the Duke has never married because he would not be espoused for the sake of his great name and fortune. This romance in real life was once dramatised under the title of 'The False Friends,' and that by a friend of the Cavendish family; yet, strange to say, the authoress of the play did not incur their displeasure."

To her sister, Lady Duncannon, afterwards Lady Beesborough, this impulsive and interesting woman was united in the closest attachment. Both, however, were cut off almost in their prime. A tendency to consumption had early

appeared in the duchess, and this late hours and constant dissipation gradually developed. Such was her spirit that she struggled on gallantly against violent fits of illness, after one of which she actually lost one of her eyes and was permanently disfigured. Against this trial, awful in her case, she bore up with the most wonderful sweetness and patience, and it was noted by her friends that all her follies had not disturbed the early religious feeling that had been implanted in her. When she was dining at Lord Stafford's, on March 6th, 1806, she was seized with her last illness, which was at once found to be fatal. In a delirium she reproached herself with all her extravagance and wasted life."

So touching was her repentance that "even the natural apathy of the Duke gave way, and bathed in tears, he assured her that if she recovered all would be forgotten and forgiven." During the last scene Devonshire House was crowded with persons coming to inquire after her. And it must have been an additional trial that at the moment her political friends had at last come to power, after so long an ostracism. She was forty-nine years old at her death.

INDEX.

AN OLD LADY'S LOVE (Mrs. Piozzi and Conway), 299; Johnson's attachment to his wife, ii. 300; to Mrs. Thrale, 300; scene at Streatham, 304; her first acquaintance with Piozzi, 306; falls in love with him, 308; marries him, 311; meets Conway, the actor, 313; her letters to him, 314; jealousy of another lady, 323; her death, 323; fate of Conway, 328.

BECKFORD, OF FONTHILL ABBEY. His gifts, ii. 191; his coming of age, 193; erects the abbey, 197; entertains Nelson and Lady Hamilton, 199; his eccentricities, 203; loss of fortune, 207; sells the abbey, 208; moves to Bath, 209; his directions for purchasing pictures, 210; his burlesque novels, 213; death, 217.

BRUMMEL, GEORGE. His parentage, ii. 87; his youth, 88; in the army, 90; his lively sayings, 91; Mr. Raikes's sagacious remarks on society, 93; breach with the Prince of Wales, 94; the Duchess of York his patroness, 95; Neptune's petition, 96; his humorous dog's petition, 96; description of his appearance, 99; his talents in society, 100; his flight to Calais, 101; clever letters, 103; visit of George IV. to Calais, 106; his lucky sixpence,

108; goes to Caen, 109; resigns his consulship, 110; arrested for debt, 111; his life in prison, 112; complains of having to "seal with a wafer," 113; dinner to him in prison, 113; released, 115; his insolence, 117; gradual decay, 118; placed in a hospital, 121; death-bed, 121.

DERRY, BISHOP OF. "God made men, women, and Herveys," ii. 45; account of the bishop's early life, 46; his eccentricities abroad, 47; his seat at Ickworth, 48; his female friends, 49; his rude speeches, 51; death, 52.

DEVONSHIRE, THE BEAUTIFUL DUCHESS OF, ii. 371; theft of the Gainsborough picture, 371; description of her, 372; character of the Duke, 373; her extravagance and difficulties, 373; her canvassing, 375; attacked in pamphlets, 378; sketch of her and her sister by Miss Burney, 380; supposed exchange of her son with a friend's, 382.

ELLIOT, HUGH. Story of, ii. 333; his brilliancy in youth, 334; a volunteer in foreign armies, 336; his reply to a rude Frenchman, 337; intercepts the despatches

of American "rebel agents," 339; his marriage, 341; an unfortunate alliance, 343; his dashing adventures and duel with Knyphausen, 343; his bold interference at Copenhagen, 350; death, 352.

FITZHERBERT, MRS. Story of, ii. 257; George IV.'s attachments, 258; account of "Perdita" Robinson, 260; her fate, 265; description of Mrs. Fitzherbert, 266; scene at Carlton House, 269; her marriage to the Prince of Wales, 274; questions and debates thereon in the House of Commons, 277; denials by Fox and others, 279; her final repudiation by the Prince, 285; kind treatment of her by the royal family, 287; story of her miniature, 290; recognition of her by William IV., 293; Grace Dalrymple Elliot, 294.

FRANCIS, SIR PHILIP. His career like that of Hugh Elliot's, i. 307; in a theatrical riot, 308; his marriage, 308; goes to India, 310; duel with Hastings, 313; romantic marriage of the latter, 314; account of Madame Grand, 317; Francis's adventure, 317; Mrs. Hastings and the diamond, 324; Madame Tallyrand's death, 326; amusing account of a duel, 328; Francis's death, 334.

GIBBON. His early love, i. 339; Susanne Curchod, 342; Gibbon's breaking off the attachment, 345; her letters, 345; Rousseau's opinion of the transaction, 349; Gibbon's adventure with Lady E. Foster, 351.

GUNNINGS, THE. Account of the family, i. 271; "John Gunning, Esq.," 272; Mrs. Bellamy's adventure, 273; ill-spelt letter of Maria Gunning, 275; parish clerk's account of, 277; Mrs. Travis, the third sister, 276; their *début* in London, 278; their great success, 280; Elizabeth married to the Duke of Hamilton, 282; Maria to Lord Coventry, 282; description of Lady Coventry, 285;

visit to Paris, 286; Mrs. Delany's account of, 288; Miss Allen, a rival beauty, 289; account of her death, 292.

HAMILTON, SIR W. His tastes, i. 177; Emma Lyons, her early life, 179; Mrs. Powell, the actress, 180; with Dr. Graham, 181; her good-nature, and letter to Mrs. Burt, 183; her *poses plastiques*, or "attitudes," 187; Goethe's description of her, 188; married to Sir W. Hamilton, 189; Romney's admiration for her, 190; his letters, 191; regard of the admirals for her, 193; Mr. Pryce Gordon, 194; Sir G. Elliot, 195; scene with the Queen of Naples, 196; Sir W. Hamilton's letters to her, 199; arrival of Nelson, 201; Lady Hamilton's services to the English fleet, 202; festivities on the return of Nelson, 207; execution of Caraccioli, 209; Trowbridge's remonstrance, 211; recall of Sir William, 212; their progress home, 213; strange scenes at German Courts, 215 *et seq.*; arrival of the party in London, 225; behaviour of Lord Nelson, 226; quarrel with and separation from Lady Nelson, 227; affection for him of Sir W. Hamilton, 229; the Rev. Dr. Nelson, 230; his oddities, 231; celebration of Nelson's victory, 234; progress through England, 235; unpublished letters of Lady Hamilton, 237; death of Sir W. Hamilton, 239; his provision for Lady Hamilton, 241; she applies for a pension, 241; Nelson's verses to her, 242; Dr. Nelson's "no put off with beggarly stalls," 243; Nelson's last letters and death, 243 *et seq.*; Lady Hamilton, his legacy to the country, 246; Dr. Nelson's behaviour, 248; Lady Hamilton's embarrassments, 249; applications to Government, 250; arrested, 251; account of Horatia, 255; goes to live at Calais, 260; her death, 262; draft of her will, 263.

IRELAND, WILLIAM HENRY. The craze for Shakespeare relics, ii. 222; receipt for old ink, 224; enthusiasm

of the antiquaries, 229; production and failure of "Vortigern," 233; publication of volume of facsimiles, 237; account of Mr. Collier's "Corrector's Folio," 239.

JONES, PAUL. His real name "Paul," ii. 125; enters the American service, 126; exploit in the *Ranger*, 126; descent on Whitehaven, 129; letter to Lady Selkirk, 130; letter of Lord Selkirk, 136; their plate restored, 137; fight with the *Drake*, 137; presents Washington with two epaulets, 141; descent on Leith, 143; combat of the *Bonhomme Richard* with the *Serapis*, 149; his treachery, 159; appeal of the English to the Dutch Court, 163; his verses, 165; honours from the French Court, 166; his love affairs, 169; letter from the American President, 176; goes to Russia, 179; disgraced, 180; vindication by Count Ségur, 181; letter to the Empress, 183; affectionate letter to his family, 185; death, 187.

KINGSTON, DUCHESS OF. Account of the Herveys, ii. 1; Lord Hervey, 2; lines on Molly Lepel, 3; Miss Chudleigh's career, 6; her marriage to Captain Hervey, 8; Duke of Hamilton proposes for her, 9; her marriage with the Duke of Kingston, 11; his death, 13; impeached for bigamy by Mr. E. Meadows, 14; put into a play by Foote, 16; her quarrel with him, 16; letters and negotiations, 17 *et seq.*; her trial, 27; her journey to Russia and strange freaks, 28; her pictures, 30; purchases an estate in Russia, 33; Rothschild giving a sovereign to a beggar, 35; the duchess's treatment of her *protégés*, 35; account of her death, 36; her will, 38.

"L. E. L." (LETITIA LONDON). First acquaintance with Mr. Jerdan, i. 364; sums received for her literary labours, 365; her journey to Paris, 366; marriage with Mr. Maclean, 377; goes to Cape Coast Castle, 377; her mysterious death, 382.

"MIE-MIE." Story of, ii., 355; account of George Selwyn's passionate affection for a child, 356; his efforts to secure its guardianship, 361; his death, 365; account of Lord Yarmouth, 365; death of the Duke of Queensberry, 367; his fortune, 367.

PITT. Not insensible to female charms, i. 355; attachment to Miss Eden, 356; breaks off the acquaintance, 358; renewal of intimacy with her family, 359.

THEODORE OF CORSICA. Adventurers in the last century, i. 1; struggle of the Corsicans with the Genoese, 10; a deliverer expected, 15; scene on the arrival of Theodore, 18; various accounts of his previous history, 21; goes to Sweden, 26; marries in Spain, 28; at Amsterdam and London, 30; at Tunis, 32; intercedes for the deputies, 33; agrees to procure aid for the Corsicans, 40; His titles, 45; letter to Drosto, 45; Sinibaldi or Garibaldi, 47; makes the Corsicans swear "an eternal peace," 49; promulgates edicts, 50; the Genoese proclamation, 52; his answer, 55; coins money, 57; his severities, 59; his reforms, 60; disaffection among his followers, 62; summons the people to meet him, 65; "The Order of Deliverance," 67; determines to depart, 71; proclamations, etc., 75; reaches Leghorn, 77; denounced by Genoese, 80; Corsicans vindicate him, 81; appears at Amsterdam, 86; Genoese apply to France for aid, 89; appeal of the Corsicans to the French King, 91; their declaration, 95; landing of the French, 97; aid from Theodore, 105; his marriage announced, 111; arrival of Dutch vessels, 112; refusal of the Dutch to deliver their stores, 120; Theodore re-embarks, 120; second landing of Theodore, 122; goes to London, 132; embarks with Admiral Matthews, 134; his new proclamation, 136; Genoese appeal to the English Government, 141; the latter's proclamation against him, 145;

Theodore returns to London, 146; arrested for debt, 147; subscription for him, and Mr. Walpole's appeal, 150; two letters of Theodore, 153; his schedule, 155; his death, 157; funeral bill, 159; account of his son Baron Frederick, 160; his death, 172.

WORMINGTON, P^{RO}. Her birth and childhood, ii. 55; her appearance at Covent

Garden, 58; admired by Garrick, 58; Tate Wilkinson's adventure with, 60; her meeting with Angelo, 66; her change of religion for a legacy, 68; member of the Irish Beefsteak Club, 70; her courage in the Dublin theatrical riots, 71; her breakdown on the stage, 72; her epitaph, 74; her fortune, 74; account of her sister, Mrs. Cholmondeley, 76; descendants, 83.

THE END.



